were, indeed, in the interval between Miss Milbanke's refusal and acceptance of him, two or three other young women of rank who, at different times, formed the subject of his matrimonial dreams. In the society of one of these, whose family had long honoured me with their friendship, he and I passed much of our time, during this and the preceding spring; and it will be found that, in a subsequent part of his correspondence, he represents me as having entertained an anxious wish that he should so far cultivate my fair friend's favour as to give a chance, at least, of matrimony being the result.

That I, more than once, expressed some such feeling, is undoubtedly true. Fully concurring with the opinion, not only of himself, but of others of his friends, that in marriage lay his only chance of salvation from the sort of perplexing attachments into which he was now constantly tempted, I saw in none of those whom he admired with more legitimate views so many requisites for the difficult task of winning him into fidelity and happiness, as in the lady in question. Combining beauty of the highest order with a mind intelligent and ingenuous,—having just learning enough to give refinement to her taste, and far too much taste to make pretensions to learning,—with a patrician spirit proud as his own, but showing it only in a delicate generosity of spirit, a feminine high-mindedness, which would have led her to tolerate his defects in consideration of his noble qualities and his glory, and even to sacrifice silently some of her own happiness rather than violate the responsibility in which she stood pledged to the world for his;—such was, from long experience, my impression of the character of this lady; and perceiving Lord Byron to be attracted by her more obvious claims to admiration, I felt a pleasure no less in rendering justice to the still rarer qualities which she possessed, than in endeavouring to raise my noble friend's mind to the contemplation of a higher model of female character than he had, unluckily for himself, been much in the habit of studying.

To this extent do I confess myself to have been influenced by the sort of feeling which he attributes to me. But in taking for granted (as it will appear he did from one of his letters) that I entertained any very decided or definite wishes on the subject, he gave me more credit for seriousness in my suggestions than I deserved. If even the lady herself, the unconscious object of these speculations, by whom he was regarded in no other light than that of a distinguished acquaintance, could have consented to undertake the perilous,—but still possible and glorious,—achievement of attaching Byron to virtue, I own that, sanguinely as, in theory, I might have looked to the result, I should have seen, not without trembling, the happiness of one whom I had known and valued from her childhood risked in the experiment.

I shall now proceed to resume the thread of the Journal, which I had broken off, and of which, it will be perceived, the noble author himself had, for some weeks, at this time, interrupted the progress.

CHAPTER XX.

1814.

JOURNAL. — THE WEEPING STANZAS. — NEWSPAPER ASSAULTS. — MR. HOBHOUSE. — FALL OF BUONAPARTE. — REPUBLICS. —KEAN. — KEMBLE. — SCHILLER'S ROBBERS, AND FIESCO.—MONTI'S ARISTODEMO. —REYNOLDS'S SAFIE.—MRS. MULE.—MISS EDGEWORTH'S PATRONAGE. — MR. CAMPBELL AND MR. MERIVALE. — MARRIAGE OF LORD PORTSMOUTH AND MISS HANSON. — SHERIDAN. — BROUGHAM. — MRS. JORDAN. — CONGREVE. — VANBRUGH. —WESTMINSTER FORUM, SCOTT VERSUS BYRON. — ANTI-BYRON.— QUARRELS OF AUTHORS. — JEFFREY. — LONDON LIFE. — BUONAPARTE'S ABDICATION.

"JOURNAL, 1814.—February 18. Better than a month since I last journalised: — most of it out of London and at Notts., but a busy one and a pleasant, at least three weeks of it. On my return, I find all the newspapers in hysterics[1], and town in an uproar,

[1] Immediately on the appearance of The Corsair, (with those obnoxious verses, "Weep, daughter of a royal line," appended to it,) a series of attacks, not confined to Lord Byron himself, but aimed also at all those who had lately become his friends, was commenced in the Courier and Morning Post, and carried on through the greater part of the months of February and March. The point selected by these writers, as a ground of censure on the poet, was one which *now*, perhaps, even themselves would agree to class among his claims to praise,—namely, the atonement which he had endeavoured to make for the youthful violence of his Satire by a measure of justice, amiable even in its overflowings, to every one whom he conceived he had wronged.

Notwithstanding the careless tone in which, here and elsewhere, he speaks of these assaults, it is evident that they annoyed him;—an effect which, in reading them over now, we should be apt to wonder they could produce, did we not recollect the property which Dryden attributes to "small wits," in common with certain other small animals:—

"We scarce could know they live, but that they *bite*.'

on the avowal and republication of two stanzas on Princess Charlotte's weeping at Regency's speech to Lauderdale in 1812.[1] They are daily at it still;—some of the abuse good, all of it hearty. They talk of a motion in our House upon it—be it so.

"Got up—redde the Morning Post, containing the battle of Buonaparte[2], the destruction of the Custom-house[3], and a paragraph on me as long as my pedigree, and vituperative, as usual.[4]

"Hobhouse is returned to England. He is my best friend, the most lively, and a man of the most sterling talents extant.

"'The Corsair' has been conceived, written, published, &c. since I last took up this journal. They tell me it has great success;—it was written *con amore*, and much from *existence*. Murray is satisfied with its progress; and if the public are equally so with the perusal, there's an end of the matter.

"Nine o'clock.

"Been to Hanson's on business. Saw Rogers, and had a note from Lady Melbourne, who says, it is said I am 'much out of spirits.' I wonder if I really am or not? I have certainly enough of 'that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart,' and it is better they should believe it to be the result of these attacks than of the real cause; but—ay, ay, always *but*, to the end of the chapter.

"Hobhouse has told me ten thousand anecdotes of Napoleon, all good and true. My friend H. is the most entertaining of companions, and a fine fellow to boot.

"Redde a little—wrote notes and letters, and am alone, which Locke says is bad company. 'Be not solitary, be not idle.'[5]—Um!—the idleness is troublesome; but I can't see so much to regret in the solitude. The more I see of men, the less I like them. If I could but say so of women too, all would be well. Why can't I? I am now six-and-twenty; my passions have had enough to cool them; my affections more than enough to wither them,—and yet—and yet—always *yet* and *but*—'Excellent well, you are a fishmonger—get thee to a nunnery.'—'They fool me to the top of my bent.'

"Midnight.

"Began a letter, which I threw into the fire. Redde—but to little purpose. Did not visit Hobhouse, as I promised and ought. No matter, the loss is mine. Smoked cigars.

"Napoleon!—this week will decide his fate. All seems against him; but I believe and hope he will win—at least, beat back the invaders. What right have we to prescribe sovereigns to France? Oh for a Republic! 'Brutus, thou sleepest.' Hobhouse abounds in continental anecdotes of this extraordinary man; all in favour of his intellect and courage, but against his *bonhommie*. No wonder;—how should he, who knows mankind well, do other than despise and abhor them?

"The greater the equality, the more impartially evil is distributed, and becomes lighter by the division among so many—therefore, a Republic!

"More notes from Madame de Staël unanswered—and so they shall remain. I admire her abilities, but really her society is overwhelming—an avalanche that buries one in glittering nonsense—all snow and sophistry.

"Shall I go to Mackintosh's on Tuesday? um!—I did not go to Marquis Lansdowne's, nor to Miss Berry's, though both are pleasant. So is Sir James's,—but I

The following is a specimen of the terms in which these party scribes could then speak of one of the masters of English song:—"They might have slept in oblivion with Lord Carlisle's Dramas and Lord Byron's Poems."—"Some certainly extol Lord Byron's Poem much, but most of the best judges place his Lordship rather low in the list of our minor poets."

[1] [See *Works*, p. 552.]

[2] [The battle of Brienne was fought, Feb. 1. 1814.]

[3] [By fire, on the 12th of February.]

[4] ["We are informed from very good authority, that as soon as the House of Lords meet again, a Peer of very independent principles and character intends to give notice of a motion occasioned by a late spontaneous avowal of a copy of verses by Lord Byron, addressed to the Princess Charlotte of Wales, in which he has taken the most unwarrantable liberties with her august father's character and conduct: this motion being of a personal nature, it will be necessary to give the noble Satirist some days' notice, that he may prepare himself for his defence against a charge of so aggravated a nature," &c.—*Morning Post*, Feb. 18.]

[5] ["Solitude," said the Doctor one day, "is dangerous to reason, without being favourable to virtue: pleasures of some sort are necessary to the intellectual as to the corporeal health; and those who resist gaiety will be likely, for the most part, to fall a sacrifice to appetite; for the solicitations of sense are always at hand, and a dram to a vacant and solitary person is a speedy and seducing relief."—"Remember," continued he, "that the solitary mortal is certainly luxurious, probably superstitious, and possibly mad: the mind stagnates for want of employment, grows morbid, and is extinguished like a candle in foul air. 'All is best,' says Cheyne, 'as it has been, excepting the errors of our own free will.' Burton concludes his long book upon melancholy with this important precept—'*Be not solitary, be not idle.*' Remember Cheyne's position, and observe Burton's precept."—*Johnsoniana*, p. 36.]

don't know — I believe one is not the better for parties; at least, unless some *regnante* is there.

"I wonder how the deuce any body could make such a world; for what purpose dandies, for instance, were ordained — and kings — and fellows of colleges — and women of 'a certain age'—and many men of any age—and myself, most of all!

"'Divesne prisco natus ab Inacho.
Nil interest, an pauper, et infimâ
De gente, sub dio moreris,
Victima nil miserantis Orci.
Omnes eodem cogimur,' &c. [1]

"Is there any thing beyond? — *who* knows? *He* that can't tell. Who tells that there *is*? He who don't know. And when shall he know? perhaps, when he don't expect, and generally when he don't wish it. In this last respect, however, all are not alike: it depends a good deal upon education, — something upon nerves and habits — but most upon digestion.

"Saturday, Feb. 19.

"Just returned from seeing Kean in Richard. By Jove, he is a soul! Life — nature — truth without exaggeration or diminution. Kemble's Hamlet is perfect; — but Hamlet is not Nature. Richard is a man; and Kean is Richard. Now to my own concerns.

"Went to Waite's. Teeth are all right and white; but he says that I grind them in my sleep and chip the edges. That same sleep is no friend of mine, though I court him sometimes for half the twenty-four.

"February 20.

"Got up and tore out two leaves of this Journal — I don't know why. Hodgson just called and gone. He has much *bonhommie* with his other good qualities, and more talent than he has yet had credit for beyond his circle.

"An invitation to dine at Holland House to meet Kean. He is worth meeting; and I hope, by getting into good society, he will be prevented from falling like Cooke. [2] He is greater now on the stage, and off he should never be less. There is a stupid and underrating criticism upon him in one of the newspapers. I thought that, last night, though great, he rather under-acted more than the first time. This may be the effect of these cavils; but I hope he has more sense than to mind them. He cannot expect to maintain his present eminence, or to advance still higher, without the envy of his green-room fellows, and the nibbling of their admirers. But, if he don't beat them all, why then — merit hath no purchase in 'these coster-monger days.'

"I wish that I had a talent for the drama; I would write a tragedy *now*. But no, — it is gone. Hodgson talks of one,— he will do it well; — and I think M—e [Moore] should try. He has wonderful powers, and much variety; besides, he has lived and felt. To write so as to bring home to the heart, the heart must have been tried, — but, perhaps, ceased to be so. While you are under the influence of passions, you only feel, but cannot describe them, — any more than, when in action, you could turn round and tell the story to your next neighbour! When all is over, — all, all, and irrevocable, — trust to memory — she is then but too faithful.

"Went out, and answered some letters, yawned now and then, and redde the 'Robbers.' Fine, — but 'Fiesco' is better [3]; and Alfieri and Monti's 'Aristodemo' *best*. [4] They are more equal than the Tedeschi dramatists.

"Answered — or rather acknowledged — the receipt of young Reynolds's poem, Safie. The lad is clever, but much of his thoughts are borrowed, — *whence*, the Reviewers may find out. [5] I hate discouraging a young one; and I think, — though wild and more oriental than he would be, had he seen the scenes where he has placed his tale, — that he has much talent, and, certainly, fire enough.

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[1] ["Whether you boast a monarch's birth,
While wealth unbounded round you flows,
Or poor, and sprung from vulgar earth,
No pity for his victim Pluto knows.
We all must tread the paths of fate,
And ever shakes the mortal urn,
Whose lot embarks us, soon or late,
On Charon's boat, ah! never to return."
FRANCIS.]

[2] ["Kean enjoyed a beef-steak at the Coal-Hole, or a devil or a grill at one of the small taverns near the theatre; but the dress and ceremony, and good behaviour incident to 'company' overset him altogether. He visited Lord Byron (then his great admirer) very reluctantly." — *Proctor's Life of Kean*, vol. ii. p. 140. The sequel of the actor's story, if possible a still sadder and more degrading one than that of his eminent predecessor G. F. Cooke, is given with all tenderness by this biographer.]

[3] [Schiller's "Robbers" and "Fiesco" have both been translated into English; the former by Mr. Thompson, the latter by Messrs. Noehden and Stoddart.]

[4] ["Monti owed the first diffusion of his reputation to his 'Aristodemo,' a tragedy, which is a stock play, notwithstanding the passion and interest are totally confined to the chief character." — HOBHOUSE.]

[5] [Safie, a poem by John Hamilton Reynolds, Esq., in imitation of Lord Byron, was published in 1814. For Lord Byron's friendly letter of advice to the youthful author, see BYRONIANA.]

"Received a very singular epistle; and the mode of its conveyance, through Lord H.'s hands, as curious as the letter itself. But it was gratifying and pretty.

"Sunday, February 27.

"Here I am, alone, instead of dining at Lord H.'s, where I was asked, — but not inclined to go any where. Hobhouse says I am growing a *loup garou*, — a solitary hobgoblin. True; — 'I am myself alone.' The last week has been passed in reading — seeing plays — now and then visitors — sometimes yawning and sometimes sighing, but no writing, — save of letters. If I could always read, I should never feel the want of society. Do I regret it? — um! — 'Man delights not me,' and only one woman — at a time.

"There is something to me very softening in the presence of a woman, — some strange influence, even if one is not in love with them — which I cannot at all account for, having no very high opinion of the sex. But yet, — I always feel in better humour with myself and every thing else, if there is a woman within ken. Even Mrs. Mule [1], my firelighter, — the most ancient and withered of her kind, — and (except to myself) not the best-tempered — always makes me laugh, — no difficult task when I am 'i' the vein.'

"Heigho! I would I were in mine island! — I am not well; and yet I look in good health. At times, I fear, 'I am not in my perfect mind;' — and yet my heart and head have stood many a crash, and what should ail them now? They prey upon themselves, and I am sick — sick — 'Prithee, undo this button — why should a cat, a rat, a dog have life — and *thou* no life at all?' [2] Six-and-twenty years, as they call them, why, I might and should have been a Pasha by this time. 'I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun.' [3]

"Buonaparte is not yet beaten; but has rebutted Blucher, and repiqued Schwartzenburg. [4] This it is to have a head. If he again wins, 'Væ victis!'

"Sunday, March 6.

"On Tuesday last dined with Rogers, — Madame de Staël, Mackintosh, Sheridan, Erskine, and Payne Knight, Lady Donegal, and Miss R. there. Sheridan told a very good story of himself and Madame de Recamier's handkerchief; Erskine a few stories of himself only. *She* is going to write a big book about England, she says; — I believe her. Asked by her how I liked Miss * *'s [Edgeworth's] thing, called ** [Patronage], and answered (very sincerely) that I thought it very bad for *her*, and worse than any of the others. Afterwards thought it possible Lady Donegal [5], being Irish, might be a patroness of ** [Miss Edgeworth], and was rather sorry for my opinion, as I hate putting people into fusses, either with themselves or their favourites; it looks as if one did it on purpose. The party went off very well, and the fish was very much to my gusto. But we got up too soon after the women; and Mrs. Corinne always lingers so long after dinner that we wish her in — the drawing-room.

"To-day C. [Campbell] called, and while sitting here in came Merivale. [6] During our colloquy, C. (ignorant that Merivale was the writer) abused the 'mawkishness of the Quarterly Review of Grimm's Correspondence.' I (knowing the secret) changed the conversation as soon as I could; and C. went away, quite convinced of having made the most favourable impression on his new acquaintance. Merivale is luckily a very good-natured fellow, or, God he knows what might have been engendered from such a mala-

[1] This ancient housemaid, of whose gaunt and witch-like appearance it would be impossible to convey any idea but by the pencil, furnished one among the numerous instances of Lord Byron's proneness to attach himself to any thing, however homely, that had once enlisted his good nature in its behalf, and become associated with his thoughts. He first found this old woman at his lodgings in Bennet Street, where, for a whole season, she was the perpetual scarecrow of his visitors. When, next year, he took chambers in Albany, one of the great advantages which his friends looked to in the change was, that they should get rid of this phantom. But, no, — there she was again — he had actually brought her with him from Bennet Street. The following year saw him married, and, with a regular establishment of servants, in Piccadilly; and here, — as Mrs. Mule had not made her appearance to any of the visitors, — it was concluded, rashly, that the witch had vanished. One of those friends, however, who had most fondly indulged in this persuasion, happening to call one day when all the male part of the establishment were abroad, saw, to his dismay, the door opened by the same grim personage, improved considerably in point of habiliments since he last saw her, and keeping pace with the increased scale of her master's household, as a new peruke, and other symptoms of promotion, testified. When asked "how he came to carry this old woman about with him from place to place," Lord Byron's only answer was, "The poor old devil was so kind to me."

[2] ["Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life,
And thou no breath at all?"— *Lear*, act v. sc. 3.]

[3] ["I 'gin to be a-weary of the sun,
And wish the estate of the world were now undone."
Macbeth, act v. sc. 5.]

[4] [Napoleon fought the battle of Nangis against Blucher on the 17th of February, 1814, and that of Montereau against Prince Schwartzenburg on the following day.]

[5] [The Marquis of Donegal married, in 1795, Anna, daughter of the late Sir Edward May, bart.]

[6] [J. H. Merivale, Esq., author of "Orlando in Roncesvalles," &c. &c.; now one of the Commissioners of the Bankruptcy Court.]

prop. I did not look at him while this was going on, but I felt like a coal — for I like Merivale, as well as the article in question.

"Asked to Lady Keith's[1] to-morrow evening — I think I will go; but it is the first party invitation I have accepted this 'season,' as the learned Fletcher called it, when that youngest brat of Lady * *'s cut my eye and cheek open with a misdirected pebble — 'Never mind, my Lord, the scar will be gone before the *season;*' as if one's eye was of no importance in the mean time.

"Lord Erskine called, and gave me his famous pamphlet[2], with a marginal note and corrections in his handwriting. Sent it to be bound superbly, and shall treasure it.

"Sent my fine print of Napoleon to be framed. It *is* framed; and the Emperor becomes his robes as if he had been hatched in them.

"March 7.

"Rose at seven — ready by half-past eight — went to Mr. Hanson's, Berkeley Square — went to church with his eldest daughter, Mary Anne (a good girl), and gave her away to the Earl of Portsmouth.[3] Saw her fairly a countess — congratulated the family and groom (bride) — drank a bumper of wine (wholesome sherris) to their felicity, and all that — and came home. Asked to stay to dinner, but could not. At three sat to Phillips for faces. Called on Lady M. [Melbourne] — I like her so well, that I always stay too long. (Mem. to mend of that.)

"Passed the evening with Hobhouse, who has begun a poem, which promises highly; — wish he would go on with it. Heard some curious extracts from a life of Morosini, the blundering Venetian, who blew up the Acropolis at Athens with a bomb, and be d—d to him! Waxed sleepy — just come home — must go to bed, and am engaged to meet Sheridan to-morrow at Rogers's.

"Queer ceremony that same of marriage — saw many abroad, Greek and Catholic — one, at *home*, many years ago. There be some strange phrases in the prologue (the exhortation), which made me turn away, not to laugh in the face of the surpliceman. Made one blunder, when I joined the hands of the happy — rammed their left hands, by mistake, into one another. Corrected it — bustled back to the altar-rail, and said 'Amen.' Portsmouth responded as if he had got the whole by heart; and, if any thing, was rather before the priest. It is now midnight and * * *.

"March 10. Thor's Day.

"On Tuesday dined with Rogers, — Mackintosh, Sheridan, Sharpe, — much talk, and good, — all, except my own little prattlement. Much of old times — Horne Tooke — the Trials — evidence of Sheridan, and anecdotes of those times, when *I*, alas! was an infant. If I had been a man, I would have made an English Lord Edward Fitzgerald.

"Set down Sheridan at Brookes's, — where, by the by, he could not have well set down himself, as he and I were the only drinkers. Sherry means to stand for Westminster, as Cochrane[4] (the stock-jobbing hoaxer) must vacate. Brougham is a candidate. I fear for poor dear Sherry. Both have talents of the highest order, but the youngster has *yet* a character. We shall see, if he lives to Sherry's age, how he will pass over the redhot ploughshares of public life. I don't know why, but I hate to see the *old* ones lose; particularly Sheridan, notwithstanding all his *méchanceté*.

"Received many, and the kindest, thanks from Lady Portsmouth, *père* and *mère*, for my match-making. I don't regret it, as she looks the countess well, and is a very good girl. It is odd how well she carries her new honours. She looks a different woman, and high-bred, too. I had no idea that I could make so good a peeress.

"Went to the play with Hobhouse. Mrs. Jordan superlative in Hoyden[5], and Jones well enough in Foppington. *What plays!* what wit! — helas! Congreve and Vanbrugh are your only comedy. Our society is too insipid now for the like copy. Would *not* go to Lady Keith's. Hobhouse thought it odd. I wonder *he* should like parties. If one is in love, and wants to break a commandment and covet any thing that is there, they do very well. But to go out amongst the mere herd, without a motive, pleasure,

[1] [Hester-Maria, eldest daughter and co-heir of Henry Thrale, Esq., of Streatham, the friend of Dr. Johnson, was married, in 1808, to Viscount Keith.]

[2] [Thomas Lord Erskine published, in 1797, a pamphlet entitled "A View of the Causes and Consequences of the War with France," which is said to have gone through forty-eight editions.]

[3] [This marriage was declared null in 1828; a jury having decided, that Lord Portsmouth was not *compos mentis* when he contracted it.]

[4] [Lord Cochrane, now Earl of Dundonald, was expelled from the order of the Bath, and from his seat in the House of Commons in the early part of 1814, in consequence of having been found guilty by the Court of King's Bench of an improper manœuvre on the Stock Exchange, in combination with his uncle Mr. Cochrane Johnstone. His lordship's career as a sea officer had been before that unfortunate time illustrious, and it has been even more so subsequently.]

[5] [Mrs. Jordan finally retired from the stage in 1815, and died at St. Cloud in July, 1816.]

or pursuit —'sdeath! 'I'll none of it.' He told me an odd report, — that *I* am the actual Conrad, the veritable Corsair, and that part of my travels are supposed to have passed in privacy. Um! — people sometimes hit near the truth; but never the whole truth. H. don't know what I was about the year after he left the Levant; nor does any one — nor — nor — nor — however, it is a lie — but, 'I doubt the equivocation of the fiend that lies like truth!'

"I shall have letters of importance to-morrow. Which, * *, * *, or * * ? heigho! — * * is in my heart, * * in my head, * * in my eye, and the *single* one, Heaven knows where. All write, and will be answered. 'Since I have crept in favour with myself, I must maintain it;' but *I* never 'mistook my person,' though I think others have.

"* * called to-day in great despair about his mistress, who has taken a freak of * * *. He began a letter to her, but was obliged to stop short — I finished it for him, and he copied and sent it. If *he* holds out, and keeps to my instructions of affected indifference, she will lower her colours. If she don't, he will, at least, get rid of her, and she don't seem much worth keeping. But the poor lad is in love — if that is the case, she will win. When they once discover their power, *finita è la musica*.

"Sleepy, and must go to bed.

"Tuesday, March 15.

"Dined yesterday with Rogers, Mackintosh, and Sharpe. Sheridan could not come. Sharpe told several very amusing anecdotes of Henderson, the actor.[1] Stayed till late, and came home, having drunk so much *tea*, that I did not get to sleep till six this morning. R. says I am to be in *this* Quarterly — cut up, I presume, as they 'hate us youth.' *N'importe*. As Sharpe was passing by the doors of some debating society (the Westminster Forum), in his way to dinner, he saw rubricked on the walls *Scott's* name and *mine* — 'Which the best poet?' being the question of the evening; and I suppose all the Templars and *would-bes* took our rhymes in vain in the course of the controversy. Which had the greater show of hands, I neither know nor care; but I feel the coupling of the names as a compliment, — though I think Scott deserves better company.

"W. W. [Wedderburn Webster] called — Lord Erskine, Lord Holland, &c. &c. Wrote to * * the Corsair report. She says she don't wonder, since 'Conrad is so *like*.' It is odd that one, who knows me so thoroughly, should tell me this to my face. However, if she don't know, nobody can.

"Mackintosh is, it seems, the writer of the defensive letter in the Morning Chronicle. If so, it is very kind, and more than I did for myself.[2]

"Told Murray to secure for me Bandello's Italian Novels at the sale to-morrow. To me they will be *nuts*. Redde a satire on myself, called 'Anti-Byron,' and told Murray to publish it if he liked. The object of the author is to prove me an atheist and a systematic conspirator against law and government. Some of the verse is good; the prose I don't quite understand. He asserts that my 'deleterious works' have had 'an effect upon civil society, which requires,' &c. &c. &c. and his own poetry. It is a lengthy poem, and a long preface, with an harmonious title-page. Like the fly in the fable, I seem to have got upon a wheel which makes much dust; but, unlike the said fly, I do not take it all for my own raising.

"A letter from *Bella*[3], which I answered. I shall be in love with her again, if I don't take care.

"I shall begin a more regular system of reading soon.

"Thursday, March 17.

"I have been sparring with Jackson for exercise this morning; and mean to continue and renew my acquaintance with the muffles. My chest, and arms, and wind are in very good plight, and I am not in flesh. I used to be a hard hitter, and my arms are very long for my height (5 feet 8½ inches). At any rate, exercise is good, and this the severest of all; fencing and the broad-sword never fatigued me half so much.

"Redde the 'Quarrels of Authors' (another sort of *sparring*) — a new work, by that most entertaining and researching writer, Israeli. They seem to be an irritable set,

[1] [This great actor and amiable and accomplished man died in 1785, in his thirty-seventh year. In Mr. Sharpe's elegant little volume of "Essays" will be found an interesting letter to Henderson, written a few days before his death, giving an account of John Kemble's first appearance on the London boards, in the character of Hamlet. "There has not," says Mr. Sharpe, "been such a first appearance since yours; yet nature, though she has been bountiful to him in figure, has denied him a voice. You have been so long without a 'brother near the throne,' that it will perhaps benefit you to be obliged to bestir yourself in Hamlet, Macbeth, Lord Townley, and Maskwell; but in Lear, Richard, Falstaff, and Benedict, you have nothing to fear, notwithstanding the known fickleness of the public, and its great love of novelty." — p. 19.]

[2] [See BYRONIANA.]

[3] [Miss Milbanke, afterwards Lady Byron.]

and I wish myself well out of it. 'I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat.' What the devil had I to do with scribbling? It is too late to inquire, and all regret is useless. But, an' it were to do again, — I should write again, I suppose. Such is human nature, at least my share of it; — though I shall think better of myself, if I have sense to stop now. If I have a wife, and that wife has a son — by any body — I will bring up mine heir in the most anti-poetical way — make him a lawyer, or a pirate, or — any thing. But, if he writes too, I shall be sure he is none of mine, and cut him off with a Bank token. Must write a letter — three o'clock.

"Sunday, March 20.

"I intended to go to Lady Hardwicke's [1], but won't. I always begin the day with a bias towards going to parties; but, as the evening advances, my stimulus fails, and I hardly ever go out — and, when I do, always regret it. This might have been a pleasant one; — at least, the hostess is a very superior woman. Lady Lansdowne's [2] to morrow — Lady Heathcote's [3] Wednesday. Um! — I must spur myself into going to some of them, or it will look like rudeness, and it is better to do as other people do — confound them!

"Redde Machiavel, parts of Chardin, and Sismondi, and Bandello — by starts. Redde the Edinburgh, 44, just come out. In the beginning of the article on 'Edgeworth's Patronage,' I have gotten a high compliment, I perceive. [4] Whether this is creditable to me, I know not; but it does honour to the editor, because he once abused me. Many a man will retract praise; none but a high-spirited mind will revoke its censure, or *can* praise the man it has once attacked. I have often, since my return to England, heard Jeffrey most highly commended by those who know him for things independent of his talents. I admire him for *this* — not because he has *praised me* (I have been so praised elsewhere and abused, alternately, that mere habit has rendered me as indifferent to both as a man at twenty-six can be to any thing), but because he is, perhaps, the *only man* who, under the relations in which he and I stand, or stood, with regard to each other, would have had the liberality to act thus; none but a great soul dared hazard it. [5] The height on which he stands has not made him giddy; — a little scribbler would have gone on cavilling to the end of the chapter. As to the justice of his panegyric, that is matter of taste. There are plenty to question it, and glad, too, of the opportunity.

"Lord Erskine called to-day. He means to carry down his reflections on the war — or rather wars — to the present day. I trust that he will. Must send to Mr. Murray to get the binding of my copy of his pamphlet finished, as Lord E. has promised me to correct it, and add some marginal notes to it. Any thing in his handwriting will be a treasure, which will gather compound interest from years. Erskine has high expectations of Mackintosh's promised History. Undoubtedly it must be a classic, when finished.

"Sparred with Jackson again yesterday morning, and shall to-morrow. I feel all the better for it, in spirits, though my arms and shoulders are very stiff from it. Mem. to attend the pugilistic dinner: — Marquess Huntley [6] is in the chair.

"Lord Erskine thinks that ministers must be in peril of going out. So much the better for him. To me it is the same who are in or out; — we want something more than a change of ministers, and some day we will have it.

"I remember [7], in riding from Chrisso to Castri (Delphos), along the sides of Parnassus, I saw six eagles in the air. It is uncommon to see so many together; and it was the number — not the species, which is

[1] [Philip Yorke, third Earl of Hardwicke, married, in 1782, Elizabeth, daughter of the Earl of Balcarres.]

[2] [Louisa-Emma, daughter of the Earl of Ilchester, was married, in 1808, to the Marquis of Lansdowne, at that time Lord Henry Petty.]

[3] [Catharine-Sophia, daughter of John Manners, Esq., of Grantham-Grange, co. Lincoln: she was married, in 1793, to Sir Gilbert Heathcote.]

[4] ["It is no slight consolation to us, while suffering under alternate reproaches for ill-timed severity, and injudicious praise, to reflect that no very mischievous effects have as yet resulted to the literature of the country, from this imputed misbehaviour on our part. Powerful genius, we are persuaded, will not be repressed even by unjust castigation; nor will the most excessive praise that can be lavished by sincere admiration ever abate the efforts that are fitted to attain to excellence. Our alleged severity upon a youthful production has not prevented the noble author from becoming the first poet of his time."— *Edinb. Rev.* vol. xxii. p. 416.]

[5] [— "All our little feuds, at least all mine,
Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubted foe
(As far as rhyme and criticism combine,
To make such puppets of us things below,)
Are over: Here's a health to 'Auld Lang Syne!'
I do not know you, and may never know
Your face — but you have acted on the whole
Most nobly, and I own it from my soul."
Don Juan, c. x. st. 16.]

[6] [Afterwards fifth, and last, Duke of Gordon. He died in May, 1836.]

[7] Part of this passage has been already extracted, but I have allowed it to remain here in its original position, on account of the singularly sudden manner in which it is introduced.

common enough — that excited my attention.[1]

"The last bird I ever fired at was an *eaglet*, on the shore of the Gulf of Lepanto, near Vostitza. It was only wounded, and I tried to save it, the eye was so bright; but it pined, and died in a few days; and I never did since, and never will, attempt the death of another bird. I wonder what put these two things into my head just now? I have been reading Sismondi, and there is nothing there that could induce the recollection.

"I am mightily taken with Braccio di Montone, Giovanni Galeazzo, and Eccelino. But the last is *not* Bracciaferro (of the same name), Count of Ravenna, whose history I want to trace. There is a fine engraving in Lavater, from a picture by Fuseli, of *that* Ezzelin, over the body of Meduna, punished by him for a *hitch* in her constancy during his absence in the Crusades. He was right — but I want to know the story.[2]

"Tuesday, March 22.

"Last night, *party* at Lansdowne House. To-night, *party* at Lady Charlotte Greville's[3] — deplorable waste of time, and something of temper. Nothing imparted — nothing acquired — talking without ideas: — if any thing like *thought* in my mind, it was not on the subjects on which we were gabbling. Heigho! — and in this way half London pass what is called life. To-morrow there is Lady Heathcote's — shall I go? yes — to punish myself for not having a pursuit.

"Let me see — what did I see? The only person who much struck me was Lady S** d's [Stafford's[4]] eldest daughter, Lady C. L.[5] [Charlotte Leveson.] They say she is *not* pretty. I don't know — every thing is pretty that pleases; but there is an air of *soul* about her — and her colour changes — and there is that shyness of the antelope (which I delight in) in her manner so much, that I observed her more than I did any other woman in the rooms, and only looked at any thing else when I thought she might perceive and feel embarrassed by my scrutiny. After all, there may be something of association in this. She is a friend of Augusta's, and whatever she loves I can't help liking.

"Her mother, the Marchioness, talked to me a little; and I was twenty times on the point of asking her to introduce me to *sa fille*, but I stopped short. This comes of that affray with the Carlisles.

"Earl Grey told me laughingly of a paragraph in the last *Moniteur*, which has stated, among other symptoms of rebellion, some particulars of the *sensation* occasioned in all our government gazettes by the 'tear' lines, — *only* amplifying, in its re-statement, an epigram (by the by, no epigram except in the *Greek* acceptation of the word) into a *roman*. I wonder the Couriers, &c. &c., have not translated that part of the Moniteur, with additional comments.[6]

"The Princess of Wales has requested Fuseli to paint from 'The Corsair,'—leaving to him the choice of any passage for the subject: so Mr. Locke tells me. Tired, jaded, selfish, and supine — must go to bed.

"*Roman*, at least *Romance*, means a song sometimes, as in the Spanish. I suppose this is the Moniteur's meaning, unless he has confused it with 'The Corsair.'

"Albany, March 28.

"This night got into my new apartments[7], rented of Lord Althorpe, on a lease of seven years. Spacious, and room for my books and sabres. *In* the *house*, too, another advantage. The last few days, or whole week,

[1] [In his Diary for 1821, Lord Byron says, "I saw a flight of *twelve* eagles (Hobhouse says they were vultures, at least in conversation), and I seized the omen. On the day before, I composed the lines to Parnassus, and on beholding the birds had a hope that Apollo had accepted my homage." — See *Works*, p. 11.]

[2] [Fuseli's picture of Ezzelin Bracciaferro musing over Meduna, slain by him for disloyalty during his absence in the Holy Land, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1780. Mr. Knowles, in his Life of the painter, relates the following anecdote: — "Fuseli frequently invented the subject of his pictures without the aid of the poet or historian, as in his composition of Ezzelin, Belisaire, and some others: these he denominated 'philosophical ideas intuitive, or sentiment personified.' On one occasion he was much amused by the following inquiry of Lord Byron: 'I have been looking in vain, Mr. Fuseli, for some months, in the poets and historians of Italy, for the subject of your picture of Ezzelin: pray where is it to be found?' 'Only in my brain, my Lord,' was the answer; 'for I invented it.'" — Vol. i. p. 403.]

[3] Daughter of William-Henry Cavendish, third Duke of Portland, married, in 1793, to Charles Greville, Esq.]

[4] [Now Duchess Countess of Sutherland: 1838.]

[5] [Now Countess of Surrey: 1838.]

[6] ["On vient de publier à Londres une caricature insolente et grossière contre le mariage projeté de la Princesse de Galles avec le Prince d'Orange. En commentant cette gravure, le *Town Talk* a osé avancer, que la Princesse Charlotte déteste son époux futur, et que ses veritables affections étaient sacrifiées à des vues politiques. Le Lord Byron a fait de ce bruit populaire le sujet d'une romance." — *Moniteur*.]

[7] [In 1808 Albany House in Piccadilly, long occupied by the Duke of York and Albany, was converted into sets of chambers for single gentlemen, and the gardens behind were also built over with additional suites of rooms. Those of Lord Byron were in the original house on the ground floor, No. 2.]

have been very abstemious, regular in exercise, and yet very *un*well.

"Yesterday, dined *tête-à-tête* at the Cocoa[1] with Scrope Davies — sat from six till midnight — drank between us one bottle of champagne and six of claret, neither of which wines ever affect me. Offered to take Scrope home in my carriage; but he was tipsy and pious, and I was obliged to leave him on his knees praying to I know not what purpose or pagod. No headach, nor sickness, that night nor to-day. Got up, if any thing, earlier than usual — sparred with Jackson *ad sudorem*, and have been much better in health than for many days. I have heard nothing more from Scrope. Yesterday paid him four thousand eight hundred pounds, a debt of some standing, and which I wished to have paid before. My mind is much relieved by the removal of that *debit*.

"Augusta wants me to make it up with Carlisle. I have refused *every* body else, but I can't deny her any thing; — so I must e'en do it, though I had as lief 'drink up Eisel — eat a crocodile.'[2] Let me see — Ward, the Hollands, the Lambs, Rogers, &c. &c. — every body, more or less, have been trying for the last two years to accommodate this *couplet* quarrel, to no purpose. I shall laugh if Augusta succeeds.

"Redde a little of many things — shall get in all my books to-morrow. Luckily this room will hold them — with 'ample room and verge, &c. the characters of hell to trace.'[3] I must set about some employment soon; my heart begins to eat *itself* again.

"April 8.

"Out of town six days. On my return, find my poor little pagod, Napoleon, pushed off his pedestal; — the thieves are in Paris. It is his own fault. Like Milo, he would rend the oak[4]; but it closed again, wedged his hands, and now the beasts — lion, bear, down to the dirtiest jackal — may all tear him. That Muscovite winter *wedged* his arms; — ever since, he has fought with his feet and teeth. The last may still leave their marks; and 'I guess now' (as the Yankees say) that he will yet play them a pass. He is in their rear — between them and their homes. Query — will they ever reach them?

"Saturday, April 9. 1814.

"I mark this day!

"Napoleon Buonaparte has abdicated the throne of the world. 'Excellent well.' Methinks Sylla did better; for he revenged and resigned in the height of his sway, red with the slaughter of his foes — the finest instance of glorious contempt of the rascals upon record.[5] Dioclesian did well too — Amurath not amiss, had he become aught except a dervise — Charles the Fifth but so so — but Napoleon, worst of all. What! wait till they were in his capital, and then talk of his readiness to give up what is already gone!! 'What whining monk art thou — what holy cheat?' 'Sdeath! — Dionysius at Corinth was yet a king to this. The 'Isle of Elba' to retire to! — Well — if it had been Caprea, I should have marvelled less. 'I see men's minds are but a parcel of their fortunes.' I am utterly bewildered and confounded.

"I don't know — but I think *I*, even *I* (an insect compared with this creature), have set my life on casts not a millionth part of this man's. But, after all, a crown may be not worth dying for. Yet, to outlive *Lodi* for this!!! Oh that Juvenal or Johnson could rise from the dead! 'Expende — quot libras in duce summo invenies?'[6] I knew they were light in the balance of mortality; but I thought their living dust weighed more *carats*.[7] Alas! this imperial diamond hath a flaw in it, and is now hardly fit to stick in a glazier's pencil:

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[1] [A club established about a century ago, in St. James's Street.]

[2] [*Hamlet*, act v. sc. 2.]

[3] [Gray's Bard.]

[4] He adopted this thought afterwards in his Ode to Napoleon, as well as most of the historical examples, in the following paragraph;

["He who of old would rend the oak,
Dream'd not of the rebound;
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke —
Alone — how look'd he round?"
See *Works*, p. 461.]

[5] ["The Roman, when his burning heart
Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger — dared depart,
In savage grandeur home.
He dared depart in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandon'd power."
Works, p. 461.]

[6] ["Produce the urn that Hannibal contains,
And weigh the mighty dust which yet remains:
And is this all?"
Gifford's Juvenal, vol. ii. p. 26.]

[7] ["In the Statistical Account of Scotland, I find that Sir John Paterson had the curiosity to collect, and weigh, the ashes of a person discovered a few years since in the parish of Eccles. Wonderful to relate, he found the whole did not exceed in weight one ounce and a half! *And is this all!* Alas! the *quot libras* itself is a satirical exaggeration."—*Ib.*]

— the pen of the historian won't rate it worth a ducat.

"Psha! 'something too much of this.' But I won't give him up even now; though all his admirers have, 'like the thanes, fallen from him.'

"April 10.

"I do not know that I am happiest when alone; but this I am sure of, that I never am long in the society even of *her* I love, (God knows too well, and the devil probably too,) without a yearning for the company of my lamp and my utterly confused and tumbled-over library.[1] Even in the day, I send away my carriage oftener than I use or abuse it. *Per esempio*, — I have not stirred out of these rooms for these four days past: but I have sparred for exercise (windows open) with Jackson an hour daily, to attenuate and keep up the ethereal part of me. The more violent the fatigue, the better my spirits for the rest of the day; and then, my evenings have that calm nothingness of languor, which I most delight in. To-day I have boxed one hour — written an ode to Napoleon Buonaparte — copied it — eaten six biscuits — drunk four bottles of soda water — redde away the rest of my time — besides giving poor * * a world of advice about this mistress of his, who is plaguing him into a phthisic and intolerable tediousness. I am a pretty fellow truly to lecture about 'the sect.' No matter, my counsels are all thrown away.

"April 19. 1814.

"There is ice at both poles, north and south — all extremes are the same — misery belongs to the highest and the lowest only, — to the emperor and the beggar, when unsixpenced and unthroned. There is, to be sure, a damned insipid medium — an equinoctial line — no one knows where, except upon maps and measurement.

"'And all our *yesterdays* have lighted fools
The way to dusty death.'

I will keep no further journal of that same hesternal torch-light; and, to prevent me from returning, like a dog, to the vomit of memory, I tear out the remaining leaves of this volume, and write, in *Ipecacuanha*, — 'that the Bourbons are restored!!!' — 'Hang up philosophy.' To be sure, I have long despised myself and man, but I never spat in the face of my species before — 'O fool! I shall go mad.'"

CHAPTER XXI.

1814.

PUBLICATION OF THE CORSAIR. — PRESENTATION OF THE COPY-RIGHT. — DEDICATION TO MR. MOORE. — LETTERS TO MR. MURRAY. — NEWSTEAD. — SIX-AND-TWENTY! — THE PRINCE REGENT. — PROPOSED RECONCILIATION WITH LORD CARLISLE. — LETTERS TO MR. MOORE. — WINDSOR POETICS. — ANTI-BYRON. — FAREWELL TO POETRY. — ODE TO NAPOLEON. — SINGULAR DETERMINATION.

THE perusal of this singular Journal having made the reader acquainted with the chief occurrences that marked the present period of his history — the publication of The Corsair, the attacks upon him in the newspapers, &c. — there only remains for me to add his correspondence at the same period, by which the moods and movements of his mind, during these events, will be still further illustrated.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Sunday, Jan. 2. 1814.

"Excuse this dirty paper — it is the *pen*ultimate half-sheet of a quire. Thanks for your books and the Ln. Chron., which I return. The Corsair is copied, and now at Lord Holland's; but I wish Mr. Gifford to have it to-night.

"Mr. Dallas is very *perverse;* so that I have offended both him and you, when I really meaned to do good, at least to one, and certainly not to annoy either.[2] But I shall

[1] "As much company," says Pope, "as I have kept, and as much as I love it, I love reading better, and would rather be employed in reading than in the most agreeable conversation."

[2] He had made a present of the copyright of "The Corsair" to Mr. Dallas, who thus describes the manner in which the gift was bestowed: — "On the 28th of December, I called in the morning on Lord Byron, whom I found composing 'The Corsair.' He had been working upon it but a few days, and he read me the portion he had written. After some observations he said, 'I have a great mind — I will.' He then added, that he should finish it soon, and asked me to accept of the copyright. I was much surprised. He had, before he was aware of the value of his works, declared that he never would take money for them, and that I should have the whole advantage of all he wrote. This declaration became morally void when the question was about thousands, instead of a few hundreds; and I perfectly agree with the admired and admirable author of Waverley, that 'the wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood, and which may be after repented of.' — I felt this on the sale of 'Childe Harold,' and observed it to him. The copyright of 'The Giaour' and 'The

manage him, I hope. — I am pretty confident of the *Tale* itself; but one cannot be sure. If I get it from Lord Holland, it shall be sent.

"Yours, &c."

TO MR. MURRAY.

["Jan. 1814.]

"I will answer your letter this evening; in the mean time, it may be sufficient to say, that there was no intention on my part to annoy you, but merely to *serve* Dallas, and also to rescue myself from a possible imputation that *I* had other objects than fame in writing so frequently. Whenever I avail myself of any profit arising from my pen, depend upon it, it is not for my own convenience; at least it never has been so, and I hope never will.

"P. S. — I shall answer this evening, and will set all right about Dallas. I thank you for your expressions of personal regard, which I can assure you I do not lightly value.

LETTER 155. TO MR. MOORE.

"January 6. 1814.

"I have got a devil of a long story in the press, entitled 'The Corsair,' in the regular heroic measure. It is a pirate's isle, peopled with my own creatures, and you may easily suppose they do a world of mischief through the three cantos. Now for your dedication — if you will accept it. This is positively my last experiment on public *literary* opinion, till I turn my thirtieth year, — if so be I flourish until that downhill period. I have a confidence for you — a perplexing one to me, and, just at present, in a state of abeyance in itself.

"However, we shall see. In the mean time, you may amuse yourself with my suspense, and put all the justices of peace in requisition, in case I come into your county with 'hackbut bent.'

"Seriously, whether I am to hear from her or him, it is a *pause*, which I shall fill up with as few thoughts of my own as I can borrow from other people. Any thing is better than stagnation; and now, in the interregnum of my autumn and a strange summer adventure, which I don't like to think of, (I don't mean * *'s, however, which is laughable only), the antithetical state of my lucubrations makes me alive, and Macbeth can 'sleep no more:' — he was lucky in getting rid of the drowsy sensation of waking again.

"Pray write to me. I must send you a copy of the letter of dedication. When do you come out? I am sure we don't *clash* this time, for I am all at sea, and in action, — and a wife, and a mistress, &c.

"Thomas, thou art a happy fellow; but if you wish us to be so, you must come up to town, as you did last year: and we shall have a world to say, and to see, and to hear. Let me hear from you.

"P. S.—Of course you will keep my secret, and don't even talk in your sleep of it. Happen what may, your dedication is ensured, being already written; and I shall copy it out fair to-night, in case business or amusement — *Amant alterna Camœnæ*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Jan. 7. 1814.

"You don't like the dedication — very well; there is another: but you will send the other to Mr. Moore, that he may know I *had* written it. I send also mottoes for the cantos. I think you will allow that an elephant may be more sagacious, but cannot be more docile.

"Yours, "BN.

"The *name* is again altered to *Medora*." [1]

LETTER 156. TO MR. MOORE.

"January 8. 1814.

"As it would not be fair to press you into a dedication, without previous notice, I send you *two*, and I will tell you *why two*. The first, Mr. M., who sometimes takes upon him the critic (and I bear it from *astonishment*), says, may do you *harm* — God forbid! — this alone makes me listen to him. The fact is, he is a damned Tory, and has, I dare swear, something of *self*, which I cannot divine, at the bottom of his objection, as it is the allusion to Ireland to which he objects. But he be d—d — though a good fellow enough (your sinner would not be worth a d—n).

Bride of Abydos' remained undisposed of, though the poems were selling rapidly, nor had I the slightest notion that he would ever again give me a copyright. But as he continued in the resolution of not appropriating the sale of his works to his own use, I did not scruple to accept that of 'The Corsair,' and I thanked him. He asked me to call and hear the portions read as he wrote them. I went every morning, and was astonished at the rapidity of his composition. He gave me the poem complete on New-year's day, 1814, saying, that my acceptance of it gave him great pleasure, and that I was fully at liberty to publish it with any bookseller I pleased, independent of the profit."

Out of this last-mentioned permission arose the momentary embarrassment between the noble poet and his publisher, to which the above notes allude.

[1] It had been at first Genevra, — not Francesca, as Mr. Dallas asserts.

"Take your choice; — no one, save he and Mr. Dallas, has seen either, and D. is quite on my side, and for the first. [1] If I can but testify to you and the world how truly I admire and esteem you, I shall be quite satisfied. As to *prose*, I don't know Addison's from Johnson's; but I will try to mend my cacology. Pray perpend, pronounce, and don't be offended with either.

"My last epistle would probably put you in a fidget. But the devil, who *ought* to be civil on such occasions, proved so, and took my letter to the right place.

"Is it not odd? — the very fate I said she had escaped from * *, she has now undergone from the worthy * *. Like Mr. Fitzgerald [2], shall I not lay claim to the character of 'Vates?' — as he did in the Morning Herald for prophesying the fall of Buonaparte, — who, by the by, I don't think is yet fallen. I wish he would rally and rout your legitimate sovereigns, having a mortal hate to all royal entails. — But I am scrawling a treatise. Good night. Ever, &c."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"January 11. 1814.

"Correct this proof by Mr. Gifford's (and from the MSS.), particularly as to the *pointing*. I have added a section for *Gulnare*, to fill up the parting, and dismiss her more ceremoniously. If Mr. Gifford or you dislike, 'tis but a *sponge* and another midnight better employed than in yawning over Miss * *[Edgeworth]; who, by the by, may soon return the compliment.

"Wednesday or Thursday.

"P. S. — I have redde * * ["Patronage"]. It is full of praises of Lord Ellenborough!!! (from which I infer near and dear relations at the bar).

"I do not love Madame de Stael; but, depend upon it, she beats all your natives hollow as an authoress, in my opinion; and I would not say this if I could help it.

"P. S. — Pray report my best acknowledgments to Mr. Gifford in any words that may best express how truly his kindness obliges me. I won't bore him with *lip* thanks or *notes*."

TO MR. MOORE.

"January 13. 1814.

"I have but a moment to write, but all is as it should be. I have said really far short of my opinion, but if you think enough, I am content. Will you return the proof by the post, as I leave town on Sunday, and have no other corrected copy? I put 'servant,' as being less familiar before the public; because I don't like presuming upon our friendship to infringe upon forms. As to the other *word*, you may be sure it is one I cannot hear or repeat too often.

"I write in an agony of haste and confusion. — Perdonate."

LETTER 157. TO MR. MURRAY.

"January 15. 1814.

"Before any proof goes to Mr. Gifford, it may be as well to revise this, where there are *words omitted*, faults committed, and the devil knows what. As to the dedication, I cut out the parenthesis of *Mr.* [3], but not another word shall move unless for a better. Mr. Moore has seen, and decidedly preferred the part your Tory bile sickens at. If every syllable were a rattle-snake, or every letter a pestilence, they should not be expunged. Let those who cannot swallow chew the expressions on Ireland; or though Mr. Croker should array himself in all his terrors against them, I care for none of you, except Gifford; and he won't abuse me, except I deserve it — which will at least reconcile me to his justice. As to the poems in Hobhouse's volume, the translation from the Romaic is well enough; but the best of the other volume (of *mine*, I mean) have been already printed. But do as you please — only as I shall be absent when you come

[1] The first was, of course, the one that I preferred. The other ran as follows: —

"January 7. 1814.

"My dear Moore,

"I had written to you a long letter of dedication, which I suppress, because, though it contained something relating to you which every one had been glad to hear, yet there was too much about politics, and poesy, and all things whatsoever, ending with that topic on which most men are fluent, and none very amusing — *one's self*. It might have been re-written — but to what purpose? My praise could add nothing to your well-earned and firmly-established fame; and with my most hearty admiration of your talents, and delight in your conversation, you are already acquainted. In availing myself of your friendly permission to inscribe this poem to you, I can only wish the offering were as worthy your acceptance as your regard is dear to,

"Yours, most affectionately and faithfully,

"BYRON."

[2] [William-Thomas Fitzgerald, facetiously termed by Cobbett the "Small Beer Poet." For more than thirty years this harmless poetaster was an attendant at the anniversary dinners of the Literary Fund, and constantly honoured the occasion with an Ode, which he himself recited with most comical dignity of emphasis. He died in 1820. See the opening lines of "English Bards," &c.]

[3] He had at first, after the words "Scott alone," inserted, in a parenthesis, — "He will excuse the *Mr.* — 'we do not say *Mr.* Cæsar.'"

out, *do*, *pray*, let Mr. *Dallas* and *you* have a care of the *press*. "Yours, &c."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"1814. January 16.

"I do believe that the devil never created or perverted such a fiend as the fool of a printer.[1] I am obliged to enclose you, *luckily* for me, this *second* proof, *corrected*, because there is an ingenuity in his blunders peculiar to himself. Let the press be guided by the present sheet. "Yours, &c.

"*Burn the other*.

"Correct *this also* by the other, in some things which I may have forgotten. There is one mistake he made, which, if it had stood, I would most certainly have broken his neck."

LETTER 158. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, January 22. 1814.

"You will be glad to hear of my safe arrival here. The time of my return will depend upon the weather, which is so impracticable, that this letter has to advance through more snows than ever opposed the Emperor's retreat. The roads are impassable, and return impossible for the present; which I do not regret, as I am much at my ease, and *six-and-twenty* complete this day — a very pretty age, if it would always last. Our coals are excellent, our fire-places large, my cellar full, and my head empty; and I have not yet recovered my joy at leaving London. If any unexpected turn occurred with my purchaser, I believe I should hardly quit the place at all; but shut my door, and let my beard grow.

"I forgot to mention (and I hope it is unnecessary) that the lines beginning — *Remember him*, &c. must *not* appear with *The Corsair*. You may slip them in with the smaller pieces newly annexed to *Childe Harold;* but on *no* account permit them to be appended to The Corsair. Have the goodness to recollect this particularly.

"The books I have brought with me are a great consolation for the confinement, and I bought more as we came along. In short, I never consult the thermometer, and shall not put up prayers for a *thaw*, unless I thought it would sweep away the rascally invaders of France. Was ever such a thing as Blucher's proclamation?

"Just before I left town, Kemble paid me the compliment of desiring me to write a *tragedy;* I wish I could, but I find my scribbling mood subsiding — not before it was time; but it is lucky to check it at all. If I lengthen my letter, you will think it is coming on again; so good-by.

"Yours alway,

"B.

"P. S. — If you hear any news of battle or retreat on the part of the Allies (as they call them), pray send it. He has my best wishes to manure the fields of France with an *invading* army. I hate invaders of all countries, and have no patience with the cowardly cry of exultation over him, at whose name you all turned whiter than the snow to which you (under Providence and that special favourite of Heaven, Prince Regent) are indebted for your triumphs.

"I open my letter to thank you for yours just received. The 'Lines to a Lady Weeping' must go with The Corsair. I care nothing for consequences, on this point. My politics are to me like a young mistress to an old man — the worse they grow, the fonder I become of them. As Mr. Gifford likes the 'Portuguese Translation[2],' pray insert it as an addition to The Corsair. [Lady Westmoreland thought it so bad, that after making me translate it, she gave *her own* version — which is, for aught I know, the best of the two. But I cannot give up my weeping lines, and I *do* think them good, and don't mind what it 'looks like.']

"In all points of difference between Mr. Gifford and Mr. Dallas, let the first keep his place; and in all points of difference between Mr. Gifford and Mr. Anybody-else, I shall abide by the former; if I am wrong, I can't help it. But I would rather not be right with any other person. So there is an end of that matter. After all the trouble he has taken about me and mine, I should be very ungrateful to feel or act otherwise. Besides, in point of judgment, he is not to be lowered by a comparison. In *politics*, he may be right too; but that with me is a *feeling*, and I can't *torify* my nature."

[1] The amusing rages into which he was thrown by the printer were vented not only in these notes, but frequently on the proof-sheets themselves. Thus, a passage in the dedication having been printed "the first of her bands in estimation," he writes in the margin, "*bards*, not *bands* — was there ever such a stupid misprint?" and in correcting a line that had been curtailed of its due number of syllables, he says, "*Do not* omit words — it is quite enough to alter or mis-spell them."

[2] His translation of the pretty Portuguese song, "Tu mi chamas." He was tempted to try another version of this ingenious thought, which is, perhaps, still more happy, and has never, I believe, appeared in print.

"You call me still your *life* — ah! change the word —
Life is as transient as th' inconstant's sigh;
Say rather I'm your *soul*, more just that name,
For, like the soul, my love can never die."

LETTER 159. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, February 4. 1814.

"I need not say that your obliging letter was very welcome, and not the less so for being unexpected. At the same time I received a very kind one from Mr. D'Israeli, which I shall acknowledge and thank him for to-morrow.

"It doubtless gratifies me much that our *finale* has pleased, and that the curtain drops gracefully.[1] *You* deserve it should, for your promptitude and good nature in arranging immediately with Mr. Dallas; and I can assure you that I esteem your entering so warmly into the subject, and writing to me so soon upon it, as a personal obligation. We shall now part, I hope, satisfied with each other. I *was* and *am* quite in earnest in my prefatory promise not to intrude any more; and this not from any affectation, but a thorough conviction that it is the best policy, and is at least respectful to my readers, as it shows that I would not willingly run the risk of forfeiting their favour in future. Besides, I have other views and objects, and think that I shall keep this resolution; for, since I left London, though shut up, *snow*-bound, *thaw*-bound, and tempted with all kinds of paper, the dirtiest of ink, and the bluntest of pens, I have not even been haunted by a wish to put them to their combined uses, except in letters of business. My rhyming propensity is quite gone, and I feel much as I did at Patras on recovering from my fever — weak, but in health, and only afraid of a relapse. I do most fervently hope I never shall.

"I see by the Morning Chronicle there hath been discussion in the *Courier;* and I read in the Morning Post a wrathful letter about Mr. Moore, in which some Protestant Reader has made a sad confusion about *India* and Ireland.

"You are to do as you please about the smaller poems; but I think removing them *now* from The Corsair looks like *fear;* and if so, you must allow me not to be pleased. I should also suppose that, after the *fuss* of these newspaper esquires, they would materially assist the circulation of The Corsair; an object I should imagine at *present* of more importance to *yourself* than Childe Harold's seventh appearance. Do as you like; but don't allow the withdrawing that *poem* to draw any imputation of *dismay* upon me. [I care about as much for the Courier as I do for the Prince, or all princes whatsoever, except Korlorsky.]

"Pray make my respects to Mr. Ward, whose praise I value most highly, as you well know; it is in the approbation of such men that fame becomes worth having. To Mr. Gifford I am always grateful, and surely not less so now than ever. And so good night to my authorship.

"I have been sauntering and dozing here very quietly, and not unhappily. You will be happy to hear that I have completely established my title-deeds as marketable, and that the purchaser has succumbed to the terms, and fulfils them, or is to fulfil them forthwith. He is now here, and we go on very amicably together, — one in each *wing* of the Abbey. We set off on Sunday — I for town, he for Cheshire.

"Mrs. Leigh is with me — much pleased with the place, and less so with me for parting with it, to which not even the price can reconcile her. Your parcel has not yet arrived — at least the *Mags.* &c.; but I have received Childe Harold and The Corsair.

"I believe both are very correctly printed, which is a great satisfaction.

"I thank you for wishing me in town; but I think one's success is most felt at a distance, and I enjoy my solitary self-importance in an agreeable sulky way of my own, upon the strength of your letter — for which I once more thank you, and am, very truly, &c.

"P. S. — Don't you think Buonaparte's next *publication* will be rather expensive to the Allies? Perry's Paris letter of yesterday looks very reviving. What a Hydra and Briareus it is! I wish they would pacify: there is no end to this campaigning."

LETTER 160. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, February 5. 1814.

"I quite forgot, in my answer of yesterday, to mention that I have no means of ascertaining whether the Newark *Pirate* has been doing what you say.[2] If so, he is a rascal, and a *shabby* rascal too; and if his offence is punishable by law or pugilism, he shall be fined or buffeted. Do you try and discover, and I will make some inquiry here. Perhaps some *other* in town may have gone on printing, and used the same deception.

"The *fac-simile* is omitted in Childe Harold, which is very awkward, as there is a

[1] It will be recollected that he had announced The Corsair as "the last production with which he should trespass on public patience for some years."

[2] Reprinting the "Hours of Idleness."

note expressly on the subject. Pray *replace* it as *usual*.

"On second and third thoughts, the withdrawing the small poems from The Corsair (even to add to Childe Harold) looks like shrinking and shuffling after the fuss made upon one of them by the Tories. Pray replace them in The Corsair's appendix. I am sorry that Childe Harold requires some and such abetments to make him move off; but, if you remember, I told you his popularity would not be permanent. It is very lucky for the author that he had made up his mind to a temporary reputation in time. The truth is, I do not think that any of the present day (and least of all, one who has not consulted the flattering side of human nature) have much to hope from posterity; and you may think it affectation very probably, but, to me, my present and past success has appeared very singular, since it was in the teeth of so many prejudices. I almost think people like to be contradicted. If Childe Harold flags, it will hardly be worth while to go on with the engravings: but do as you please; I have done with the whole concern; and the enclosed lines, written years ago, and copied from my skull-cap, are among the last with which you will be troubled. If you like, add them to Childe Harold, if only for the sake of another outcry. You received so long an answer yesterday, that I will not intrude on you further than to repeat myself,

"Yours, &c.

"P. S.— Of course, in reprinting (if you have occasion), you will take great care to be correct. The present editions seem very much so, except in the last note of Childe Harold, where the word *responsible* occurs twice nearly together; correct the second into *answerable*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newark, February 6. 1814.

"I am thus far on my way to town. Master Ridge[1] I have seen, and he owns to having *reprinted* some *sheets*, to make up a few complete remaining copies! I have now given him fair warning, and if he plays such tricks again, I must either get an injunction, or call for an account of profits (as I never have parted with the copyright), or, in short, any thing vexatious, to repay him in his own way. If the weather does not relapse, I hope to be in town in a day or two.

"Yours, &c."

[1] The printer at Newark.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 7. 1814.

"I see all the papers in a sad commotion with those eight lines; and the Morning Post, in particular, has found out that I am a sort of Richard III. — deformed in mind and *body*. The *last* piece of information is not very new to a man who passed five years at a public school.

"I am very sorry you cut out those lines for Childe Harold. Pray re-insert them in their old place in 'The Corsair.'"

LETTER 161. TO MR. HODGSON.

"February 28. 1814.

"There is a youngster, and a clever one, named Reynolds, who has just published a poem called 'Safie,' published by Cawthorne. He is in the most natural and fearful apprehension of the Reviewers; and as you and I both know by experience the effect of such things upon a *young* mind, I wish *you* would take his production into dissection, and do it *gently*. *I* cannot, because it is inscribed to me; but I assure you this is not my motive for wishing him to be tenderly entreated, but because I know the misery, at his time of life, of untoward remarks upon first appearance.

"Now for *self*. Pray thank your *cousin* — it is just as it should be, to my liking, and propably *more* than will suit any one else's. I hope and trust that you are well and well doing. Peace be with you. Ever yours, my dear friend."

LETTER 162. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 10. 1814.

"I arrived in town late yesterday evening, having been absent three weeks, which I passed in Notts. quietly and pleasantly. You can have no conception of the uproar the eight lines on the little Royalty's weeping in 1812 (now republished) have occasioned. The R**, who had always thought them *yours*, chose — God knows why — on discovering them to be mine, to be *affected* 'in sorrow rather than anger.' The Morning Post, Sun, Herald, Courier, have all been in hysterics ever since. M. is in a fright, and wanted to shuffle; and the abuse against me in all directions is vehement, unceasing, loud — some of it good, and all of it hearty. I feel a little compunctious as to the R**'s *regret;* — 'would he had been only angry! but I fear him not.'

"Some of these same assailments you have probably seen. My person (which is

excellent for 'the nonce') has been denounced in verses, the more like the subject, inasmuch as they halt exceedingly. Then, in another, I am an *atheist*, a *rebel*, and, at last, the *devil* (*boiteux*, I presume).[1] My demonism seems to be a female's conjecture; if so, perhaps, I could convince her that I am but a mere mortal, — if a queen of the Amazons may be believed, who says αριστον χωλος οιθει. I quote from memory, so my Greek is probably deficient; but the passage is *meant* to mean * *.

"Seriously, I am in, what the learned call, a dilemma, and the vulgar, a scrape; and my friends desire me not to be in a passion; and, like Sir Fretful, I assure them that I am 'quite calm,' — but I am nevertheless in a fury.

"Since I wrote thus far, a friend has come in, and we have been talking and buffooning till I have quite lost the thread of my thoughts; and as I won't send them unstrung to you, good morning, and

"Believe me ever, &c.

"P. S. — Murray, during my absence, *omitted* the Tears in several of the copies. I have made him replace them, and am very wroth with his qualms; — 'as the wine is poured out, let it be drunk to the dregs.'"

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 10. 1814.

"I am much better, and indeed quite well, this morning. I have received *two*, but I presume there are more of the *Ana*, subsequently, and also something previous, to which the Morning Chronicle replied. You also mentioned a parody on the *Skull*. I wish to see them all, because there may be things that require notice either by pen or person.

"Yours, &c.

"You need not trouble yourself to answer this; but send me the things when you get them."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 12. 1814.

"If you have copies of the 'Intercepted Letters[2],' Lady Holland would be glad of a volume; and when you have served others, have the goodness to think of your humble servant.

"You have played the devil by that injudicious *suppression*, which you did totally without my consent. Some of the papers have exactly said what might be expected. Now I *do* not, and *will* not be supposed to shrink, although myself and every thing belonging to me were to perish with my memory. Yours, &c. "Bn.

"P. S. — Pray attend to what I stated yesterday on *technical* topics."

LETTER 163. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Monday, February 14. 1814.

"Before I left town yesterday, I wrote you a note, which I presume you received. I have heard so many different accounts of *your* proceedings, or rather of those of others towards *you*, in consequence of the publication of these everlasting lines, that I am anxious to hear from yourself the real state of the case. Whatever responsibility, obloquy, or effect is to arise from the publication, should surely *not* fall upon you in any degree; and I can have no objection to your stating, as distinctly and publicly as you please, *your* unwillingness to publish them, and my own obstinacy upon the subject. Take any course you please to vindicate *yourself*, but leave me to fight my own way; and, as I before said, do not *compromise* me by any thing which may look like *shrinking* on *my* part; as for your own, make the best of it. Yours, "Bn."

LETTER 164. TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 16. 1814.

"My dear Rogers,

"I wrote to Lord Holland briefly, but I hope distinctly, on the subject which has lately occupied much of my conversation with him and you.[3] As things now stand, upon that topic my determination must be unalterable.

"I declare to you most sincerely that there is no human being on whose regard and esteem I set a higher value than on Lord Holland's; and, as far as concerns himself, I would concede even to humiliation, without any view to the future, and solely from my sense of his conduct as to the past. For the rest, I conceive that I have already done all in my power by the suppression.[4] If that is not enough, they must act as they please; but I will not 'teach my tongue a most inherent baseness,' come what may. You will probably be at

[1] [See Byroniana, *sub anno* 1814.]

[2] ["Letters and Despatches of the Generals, Ministers, &c., at Paris, to the Emperor Napoleon, at Dresden; intercepted by the advanced Troops of the Allies in the North of Germany;" published by Mr. Murray in 1814.]

[3] Relative to a proposed reconciliation between Lord Carlisle and himself.

[4] Of the Satire.

the Marquis of Lansdowne's to-night. I am asked, but I am not sure that I shall be able to go. Hobhouse will be there. I think, if you knew him well, you would like him.

"Believe me always yours very affectionately, "B."

LETTER 165. TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 16. 1814.

"If Lord Holland is satisfied, as far as regards himself and Lady Hd., and as this letter expresses him to be, it is enough.

"As for any impression the public may receive from the revival of the lines on Lord Carlisle, let them keep it, — the more favourable for him, and the worse for me, — better for all.

"All the sayings and doings in the world shall not make me utter another word of conciliation to any thing that breathes. I shall bear what I can, and what I cannot I shall resist. The worst they could do would be to exclude me from society. I have never courted it, nor, I may add, in the general sense of the word, enjoyed it — and 'there is a world elsewhere!'

"Any thing remarkably injurious, I have the same means of repaying as other men, with such interest as circumstances may annex to it.

"Nothing but the necessity of adhering to regimen prevents me from dining with you to-morrow.

"I am yours most truly.

"BN."

LETTER 166. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 16. 1814.

"You may be assured that the only prickles that sting from the Royal hedgehog are those which possess a torpedo property, and may benumb some of my friends. *I* am quite silent, and 'hush'd in grim repose.' The frequency of the assaults has weakened their effects, — if ever they had any; — and, if they had had much, I should hardly have held my tongue, or withheld my fingers. It is something quite new to attack a man for abandoning his resentments. I have heard that previous praise and subsequent vituperation were rather ungrateful, but I did not know that it was wrong to endeavour to do justice to those who did not wait till I had made some amends for former and boyish prejudices, but received me into their friendship, when I might still have been their enemy.

"You perceive justly that I must *intentionally* have made my fortune like Sir Francis Wronghead. It were better if there were more merit in my independence, but it really is something nowadays to be independent at all, and the *less* temptation to be otherwise, the more uncommon the case, in these times of paradoxical servility. I believe that most of our hates and likings have been hitherto nearly the same; but from henceforth they must, of necessity, be one and indivisible, — and now for it! I am for any weapon, — the pen, till one can find something sharper, will do for a beginning.

"You can have no conception of the ludicrous solemnity with which these two stanzas have been treated. The Morning Post gave notice of an intended motion in the House of my brethren on the subject, and God he knows what proceedings besides; — and all this, as Bedreddin in the 'Nights' says, 'for making a cream tart without pepper.' This last piece of intelligence is, I presume, too laughable to be true; and the destruction of the Custom-house appears to have, in some degree, interfered with mine; added to which, the last battle of Buonaparte has usurped the column hitherto devoted to my bulletin.

"I send you from this day's Morning Post the best which have hitherto appeared on this 'impudent doggerel,' as the Courier calls it. There was another about my *diet*, when a boy — not at all bad — some time ago; but the rest are but indifferent.

"I shall think about your *oratorical* hint[1]; — but I have never set much upon 'that cast,' and am grown as tired as Solomon of every thing, and of myself more than any thing. This is being what the learned call philosophical, and the vulgar lack-a-daisical. I am, however, always glad of a blessing[2]; pray, repeat yours soon, — at least your letter, and I shall think the benediction included.

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 167. TO MR. DALLAS.

"February 17. 1814.

"The Courier of this evening accuses me of having 'received and pocketed' large sums for my works. I have never yet received, nor wish to receive, a farthing for any. Mr. Murray offered a thousand for The Giaour and Bride of Abydos, which I said was too

[1] I had endeavoured to persuade him to take a part in parliamentary affairs, and to exercise his talent for oratory more frequently.

[2] In concluding my letter, having said "God bless you!" I added — "that is, if you have no objection."

much, and that if he could afford it at the end of six months, I would then direct how it might be disposed of; but neither then, nor at any other period, have I ever availed myself of the profits on my own account. For the republication of the Satire I refused four hundred guineas; and for the previous editions I never asked nor received a *sous*, nor for any writing whatever. I do not wish you to do any thing disagreeable to yourself; there never was nor shall be any conditions nor stipulations with regard to any accommodation that I could afford you; and, on your part, I can see nothing derogatory in receiving the copyright. It was only assistance afforded to a worthy man, by one not quite so worthy.

"Mr. Murray is going to contradict this [1]; but your *name* will not be mentioned: for your own part, you are a free agent, and are to do as you please. I only hope that now, as always, you will think that I wish to take no unfair advantage of the accidental opportunity which circumstances permitted me of being of use to you.

"Ever, &c."

In consequence of this letter, Mr. Dallas addressed an explanation to one of the newspapers, of which the following is a part; — the remainder being occupied with a rather clumsily managed defence of his noble benefactor on the subject of the Stanzas.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST.

"Sir,

"I have seen the paragraph in an evening paper, in which Lord Byron is *accused* of 'receiving and pocketing' large sums for his works. I believe no one who knows him has the slightest suspicion of this kind; but the assertion being public, I think it a justice I owe to Lord Byron to contradict it publicly. I address this letter to you for that purpose, and I am happy that it gives me an opportunity at this moment to make some observations which I have for several days been anxious to do publicly, but from which I have been restrained by an apprehension that I should be suspected of being prompted by his Lordship.

"I take upon me to affirm, that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works. To my certain knowledge, the profits of the Satire were left entirely to the publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage I have already publicly acknowledged in the dedication of the new edition of my novels; and I now add my acknowledgment for that of The Corsair, not only for the profitable part of it, but for the delicate and delightful manner of bestowing it while yet unpublished. With respect to his two other poems, The Giaour and The Bride of Abydos, Mr. Murray, the publisher of them, can truly attest that no part of the sale of them has ever touched his hands, or been disposed of for his use. Having said thus much as to facts, I cannot but express my surprise that it should ever be deemed a matter of reproach that he should appropriate the pecuniary returns of his works. Neither rank nor fortune seems to me to place any man above this; for what difference does it make in honour and noble feelings, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its value employed, in beneficent purposes? I differ with my Lord Byron on this subject as well as some others; and he has constantly, both by word and action, shown his aversion to receiving money for his productions."

[1] The statement of the Courier, &c.

LETTER 168. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 26. 1814.

"Dallas had, perhaps, have better kept silence; — but that was *his* concern, and, as his facts are correct, and his motive not dishonourable to himself, I wished him well through it. As for his interpretations of the lines, he and any one else may interpret them as they please. I have and shall adhere to my taciturnity, unless something very particular occurs to render this impossible. Do *not you* say a word. If any one is to speak, it is the person principally concerned. The most amusing thing is, that every one (to me) attributes the abuse to the *man they personally most dislike!* — some say C**r [Croker], some C**e [Coleridge], others F**d [Fitzgerald], &c. &c. &c. I do not know, and have no clue but conjecture. L discovered, and he turns out a hireling, he must be left to his wages; if a cavalier, he must 'wink, and hold out his iron.'

"I had some thoughts of putting the question to C**r [Croker], but Hobhouse, who, I am sure, would not dissuade me if it were right, advised me by all means *not;* — 'that I had no right to take it upon suspicion,' &c. &c. Whether H. is correct I am not aware, but he believes himself so, and says there can be but one opinion on that subject. This I am, at least, sure of, that he would never prevent me from doing what he deemed the duty of a *preux* chevalier. In such cases — at least, in this country — we must act according to usages. In considering

this instance, I dismiss my own personal feelings. Any man will and must fight, when necessary, — even without a motive. *Here*, I should take it up really without much resentment; for, unless a woman one likes is in the way, it is some years since I felt a *long* anger. But, undoubtedly, could I, or may I, trace it to a man of station, I should and shall do what is proper.

"* * was angerly, but tried to conceal it. *You* are not called upon to avow the 'Two-penny,' and would only gratify them by so doing. Do you not see the great object of all these fooleries is to set him, and you, and me, and all persons whatsoever, by the ears? — more especially those who are on good terms, — and nearly succeeded. Lord H. wished me to *concede* to Lord Carlisle — concede to the devil; — to a man who used me ill? I told him, in answer, that I would neither concede nor recede on the subject, but be silent altogether; unless any thing more could be said about Lady H. and himself, who had been since my very good friends; — and there it ended. This was no time for concessions to Lord C.

"I have been interrupted, but shall write again soon. Believe me ever, my dear Moore, &c."

Another of his friends having expressed, soon after, some intention of volunteering publicly in his defence, he lost no time in repressing him by the following sensible letter: —

LETTER 169. TO WEDDERBURN WEBSTER, ESQ.

"February 28. 1814.

"My dear W.,

"I have but a few moments to write to you. *Silence* is the only answer to the things you mention; nor should I regard that man as my friend who said a word more on the subject. I care little for attacks, but I will not submit to *defences;* and I do hope and trust that *you* have never entertained a serious thought of engaging in so foolish a controversy. Dallas's letter was, to his credit, merely as to facts which he had a right to state; *I* neither have nor shall take the least *public* notice, nor permit any one else to do so. If I discover the writer, then I may act in a different manner; but it will not be in writing.

"An expression in your letter has induced me to write this to you, to entreat you not to interfere in any way in such a business, — it is now nearly over, and depend upon it *they* are much more chagrined by my silence than they could be by the best defence in the world. I do not know any thing that would vex me more than any further reply to these things.

"Ever yours, in haste,

"B."

LETTER 170. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 3. 1814.

"My dear Friend,

"I have a great mind to tell you that I *am* 'uncomfortable,' if only to make you come to town; where no one ever more delighted in seeing you, nor is there any one to whom I would sooner turn for consolation in my most vapourish moments. The truth is, I have 'no lack of argument' to ponder upon of the most gloomy description, but this arises from *other* causes. Some day or other, when we are *veterans*, I may tell you a tale of present and past times; and it is not from want of confidence that I do not now, — but — but — always a *but* to the end of the chapter.

"There is nothing, however, upon the *spot* either to love or hate; — but I certainly have subjects for both at no very great distance, and am besides embarrassed between *three* whom I know, and one (whose name, at least) I do not know. All this would be very well if I had no heart; but, unluckily, I have found that there is such a thing still about me, though in no very good repair, and, also, that it has a habit of attaching itself to *one* whether I will or no. 'Divide et impera,' I begin to think, will only do for politics.

"If I discover the 'toad,' as you call him, I shall 'tread,' — and put spikes in my shoes to do it more effectually. The effect of all these fine things I do not inquire much nor perceive. I believe * * felt them more than either of us. People are civil enough, and I have had no dearth of invitations, — none of which, however, I have accepted. I went out very little last year, and mean to go about still less. I have no passion for circles, and have long regretted that I ever gave way to what is called a town life; — which, of all the lives I ever saw (and they are nearly as many as Plutarch's), seems to me to leave the least for the past and future.

"How proceeds the poem? Do not neglect it, and I have no fears. I need not say to you that your fame is dear to me, — I really might say *dearer* than my own; for I have lately begun to think my things have been strangely over-rated; and, at any rate, whether or not, I have done with them for ever. I may say to you what I would not say to every body, that the last two were written, The Bride in four, and The Corsair

in ten days [1], — which I take to be a most humiliating confession, as it proves my own want of judgment in publishing, and the public's in reading things, which cannot have stamina for permanent attention. 'So much for Buckingham.'

"I have no dread of your being too hasty, and I have still less of your failing. But I think a *year* a very fair allotment of time to a composition which is not to be Epic; and even Horace's 'Nonum prematur' must have been intended for the Millennium, or some longer-lived generation than ours. I wonder how much we should have had of *him*, had he observed his own doctrines to the letter. Peace be with you! Remember that I am always and most truly yours, &c.

"P. S. — I never heard the 'report' you mention, nor, I dare say, many others. But, in course, you, as well as others, have 'damned good-natured friends,' who do their duty in the usual way. One thing will make you laugh. * * * *"

LETTER 171. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 12. 1814.

"Guess darkly, and you will seldom err. At present, I shall say no more, and, perhaps — but no matter. I hope we shall some day meet, and whatever years may precede or succeed it, I shall mark it with the 'white stone' in my calendar. I am not sure that I shall not soon be in your neighbourhood again. If so, and I am alone (as will probably be the case), I shall invade and carry you off, and endeavour to atone for sorry fare by a sincere welcome. I don't know the person absent (barring 'the sect') I should be so glad to see again.

"I have nothing of the sort you mention but *the lines* (the Weepers), if you like to have them in the Bag. I wish to give them all possible circulation. The *Vault* reflection is downright actionable, and to print it would be peril to the publisher; but I think the Tears have a natural right to be bagged, and the editor (whoever he may be) might supply a facetious note or not, as he pleased.

"I cannot conceive how the *Vault* [2] has got about, — but so it is. It is too *farouche;* but, truth to say, my satires are not very playful. I have the plan of an epistle in my head, *at* him and *to* him; and, if they are not a little quieter, I shall embody it. I should say little or nothing of *myself.* As to mirth and ridicule, that is out of my way; but I have a tolerable fund of sternness and contempt, and, with Juvenal before me, I shall perhaps read him a lecture he has not lately heard in the Cabinet. From particular circumstances, which came to my knowledge almost by accident, I could 'tell him what he is — I know him well.'

"I meant, my dear M., to write to you a long letter, but I am hurried, and time clips my inclination down to yours, &c.

"P. S. — *Think again* before you *shelf* your poem. There is a youngster, (older than me, by the by, but a younger poet,) Mr. G. Knight, with a volume of Eastern Tales, written since his return, — for he has been in the countries. He sent to me last summer, and I advised him to write one in *each measure*, without any intention, at that time, of doing the same thing. Since that, from a habit of writing in a fever, I have anticipated him in the variety of measures, but quite unintentionally. Of the stories, I know nothing, not having seen them [3]; but *he* has some lady in a sack, too, like The Giaour: — he told me at the time.

"The best way to make the public 'forget' me is to remind them of yourself. You cannot suppose that *I* would ask you or advise you to publish, if I thought you would *fail.* I really have *no* literary envy; and I do not believe a friend's success ever sat nearer another than yours does to my best wishes. It is for *elderly gentlemen* to 'bear no brother near,' and cannot become our disease for more years than we may perhaps number. I wish you to be out before Eastern subjects are again before the public."

[1] In asserting that he devoted but four days to the composition of The Bride, he must be understood to refer only to the first sketch of that poem, — the successive additions by which it was increased to its present length having occupied, as we have seen, a much longer period. The Corsair, on the contrary, was, from beginning to end, struck off at a heat — there being but little alteration or addition afterwards, — and the rapidity with which it was produced (being at the rate of nearly two hundred lines a day) would be altogether incredible, had we not his own, as well as his publisher's, testimony to the fact. Such an achievement, — taking into account the surpassing beauty of the work, — is, perhaps, wholly without a parallel in the history of Genius, and shows that 'écrire *par passion*,' as Rousseau expresses it, may be sometimes a shorter road to perfection than any that Art has ever struck out.

[2] Those bitter and powerful lines which he wrote on the opening of the vault that contained the remains of Henry VIII. and Charles I. [See *Works*, p. 558.]

[3] He was not yet aware, it appears, that the anonymous manuscript sent to him by his publisher was from the pen of Mr. Knight.

LETTER 172. TO MR. MURRAY.

"March 12. 1814.

"I have not time to read the whole MS.[1], but what I have seen seems very well written (both *prose* and *verse*), and, though I am and can be no judge (at least a *fair* one on this subject), containing nothing which you *ought* to hesitate publishing upon *my* account. If the author is not Dr. *Busby* himself, I think it a pity, on his *own* account, that he should dedicate it to his subscribers; nor can I perceive what Dr. Busby has to do with the matter except as a translator of Lucretius, for whose doctrines he is surely not responsible. I tell you openly, and really most sincerely, that, if published at all, there is no earthly reason why you should *not;* on the contrary, I should receive it as the greatest compliment *you* could pay to your good opinion of my candour, to print and circulate that or any other work, attacking me in a manly manner, and without any malicious intention, from which, as far as I have seen, I must exonerate this writer.

"He is wrong in one thing — *I* am no *atheist;* but if he thinks I have published principles tending to such opinions, he has a perfect right to controvert them. Pray publish it; I shall never forgive myself if I think that I have prevented you.

"Make my compliments to the author, and tell him I wish him success: his verse is very deserving of it; and I shall be the last person to suspect his motives.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — If *you* do not publish it, some one else will. You cannot suppose me so narrow-minded as to shrink from discussion. I repeat once for all, that I think it a good poem (as far as I have redde); and that is the only point *you* should consider. How odd that *eight lines* should have given birth, I really think, to *eight thousand*, including *all* that has been said, and will be on the subject!"

LETTER 173. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 9. 1814.

"All these news are very fine; but nevertheless I want my books, if you can find, or cause them to be found for me, — if only to lend them to Napoleon, in "the Island of Elba," during his retirement. I also (if convenient, and you have no party with you,) should be glad to speak with you, for a few minutes, this evening, as I have had a letter from Mr. Moore, and wish to ask you, as the best judge, of the best time for him to publish the work he has composed. I need not say, that I have his success much at heart; not only because he is my friend, but something much better — a man of great talent, of which he is less sensible than I believe any even of his enemies. If you can so far oblige me as to step down, do so; and if you are otherwise occupied, say nothing about it. I shall find you at home in the course of next week.

"P. S. — I see Sotheby's Tragedies advertised. The Death of Darnley is a famous subject — one of the best, I should think, for the drama. Pray let me have a copy when ready.

"Mrs. Leigh was very much pleased with her books, and desired me to thank you; she means, I believe, to write to you her acknowledgments."

LETTER 174. TO MR. MOORE.

"2. Albany, April 9. 1814.

"Viscount Althorp is about to be married[2], and I have gotten his spacious bachelor apartments in Albany, to which you will, I hope, address a speedy answer to this mine epistle.

"I am but just returned to town, from which you may infer that I have been out of it; and I have been boxing, for exercise, with Jackson for this last month daily. I have also been drinking, and, on one occasion, with three other friends at the Cocoa Tree, from six till four, yea, unto five in the matin. We clareted and champagned till two — then supped, and finished with a kind of regency punch composed of madeira, brandy, and *green* tea, no *real* water being admitted therein. There was a night for you! without once quitting the table, except to ambulate home, which I did alone, and in utter contempt of a hackney-coach and my own *vis*, both of which were deemed necessary for our conveyance. And so, — I am very well, and they say it will hurt my constitution.

"I have also, more or less, been breaking a few of the favourite commandments; but I mean to pull up and marry, if any one will have me. In the mean time, the other

[1] The manuscript of a long grave satire, entitled "Anti-Byron," which had been sent to Mr. Murray, and by him forwarded to Lord Byron, with a request — not meant, I believe, seriously — that he would give his opinion as to the propriety of publishing it.

[2] [Viscount Althorp (now Earl Spencer) married, 14th April, 1814, Esther, only daughter and heir of Richard Acklom, Esq., of Wiseton Hall, Notts.]

day I nearly killed myself with a collar of brawn, which I swallowed for supper, and *in*digested for I don't know how long: but that is by the by. All this gourmandise was in honour of Lent; for I am forbidden meat all the rest of the year, but it is strictly enjoined me during your solemn fast. I have been, and am, in very tolerable love; but of that hereafter as it may be.

"My dear Moore, say what you will in your preface; and quiz any thing or any body, — me if you like it. Oons! dost thou think me of the *old*, or rather *elderly*, school? If one can't jest with one's friends, with whom can we be facetious? You have nothing to fear from * *, whom I have not seen, being out of town when he called. He will be very correct, smooth, and all that, but I doubt whether there will be any 'grace beyond the reach of art;' — and, whether there is or not, how long will you be so d—d modest? As for Jeffrey, it is a very handsome thing of him to speak well of an old antagonist, — and what a mean mind dared not do. Any one will revoke praise; but — were it not partly my own case — I should say that very few have strength of mind to unsay their censure, or follow it up with praise of other things.

"What think you of the review of *Levis?*[1] It beats the Bag and my hand-grenade hollow, as an invective, and hath thrown the Court into hysterics, as I hear from very good authority. Have you heard from ***?

"No more rhyme for — or rather, *from* — me. I have taken my leave of that stage, and henceforth will mountebank it no longer. I have had my day, and there's an end. The utmost I expect, or even wish, is to have it said in the Biographia Britannica, that I might perhaps have been a poet, had I gone on and amended. My great comfort is, that the temporary celebrity I have wrung from the world has been in the very teeth of all opinions and prejudices. I have flattered no ruling powers; I have never concealed a single thought that tempted me. They can't say I have truckled to the times, nor to popular topics, (as Johnson, or somebody, said of Cleveland,) and whatever I have gained has been at the expenditure of as much *personal* favour as possible; for I do believe never was a bard more unpopular, *quoad homo*, than myself. And now I have done; — 'ludite nunc alios.' Every body may be d—d, as they seem fond of it, and resolve to stickle lustily for endless brimstone.

"Oh — by the by, I had nearly forgot. There is a long poem, an 'Anti-Byron,' coming out, to prove that I have formed a conspiracy to overthrow, by *rhyme*, all religion and government, and have already made great progress! It is not very scurrilous, but serious and ethereal. I never felt myself important, till I saw and heard of my being such a little Voltaire as to induce such a production. Murray would not publish it, for which he was a fool, and so I told him; but some one else will, doubtless. 'Something too much of this.'

"Your French scheme is good, but let it be *Italian;* all the Angles will be at Paris. Let it be Rome, Milan, Naples, Florence, Turin, Venice, or Switzerland, and 'egad!' (as Bayes saith,) I will connubiate and join you; and we will write a new 'Inferno' in our Paradise. Pray think of this — and I will really buy a wife and a ring, and say the ceremony, and settle near you in a summer-house upon the Arno, or the Po, or the Adriatic.

"Ah! my poor little pagod, Napoleon, has walked off his pedestal. He has abdicated, they say. This would draw molten brass from the eyes of Zatanai. What! 'kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet and then be baited by the rabble's curse!' I cannot bear such a crouching catastrophe. I must stick to Sylla, for my modern favourites don't do, — their resignations are of a different kind. All health and prosperity, my dear Moore. Excuse this lengthy letter. Ever, &c.

"P. S. — The Quarterly quotes you frequently in an article on America[2]; and every body I know asks perpetually after you and yours. When will you answer them in person?"

He did not long persevere in his resolution against writing, as will be seen from the following notes to his publisher.

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 10. 1814.

"I have written an Ode on the fall of Napoleon, which, if you like, I will copy out, and make you a present of. Mr. Merivale has seen part of it, and likes it. You may show it to Mr. Gifford, and print

[1] ["Souvenirs et Portraits, par M. de Levis." See *Edin. Review*, vol. xxii. p. 281.]

[2] [A critique on Inchiquen's "State of Society in America," in which the reviewer had quoted Mr. Moore's description of the city of Washington in 1806: —

"That famed metropolis, where fancy sees
Squares in morasses, obelisks in trees;
Which travelling fools and gazetteers adorn
With shrines unbuilt, and heroes yet unborn."]

it, or not, as you please — it is of no consequence. It contains nothing in *his* favour, and no allusion whatever to our own government or the Bourbons.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — It is in the measure of my stanzas at the end of Childe Harold, which were much liked, beginning, 'And thou art dead,' &c. &c. There are ten stanzas of it — ninety lines in all."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 11. 1814.

"I enclose you a letter*et* from Mrs. Leigh.

"It will be best *not* to put my name to our *Ode;* but you may *say* as openly as you like that it is mine, and I can inscribe it to Mr. Hobhouse, from the *author*, which will mark it sufficiently. After the resolution of not publishing, though it is a thing of little length and less consequence, it will be better altogether that it is anonymous; but we will incorporate it in the first *tome* of ours that you find time or the wish to publish. Yours alway, "B.

"P. S. — I hope you got a note of alterations, sent this matin?

"P. S. — Oh my books! my books! will you never find my books?

"Alter '*potent* spell' to '*quickening* spell:' the first (as Polonius says) 'is a vile phrase,' and means nothing, besides being commonplace and *Rosa-Matilda-ish*."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 12. 1814.

"I send you a few notes and trifling alterations, and an additional motto from Gibbon, which you will find *singularly appropriate*. A 'Good-natured Friend' tells me there is a most scurrilous attack on *us* in the Anti-jacobin Review, which you have *not* sent. Send it, as I am in that state of languor which will derive benefit from getting into a passion. Ever, &c."

LETTER 175. TO MR. MOORE.

"Albany, April 20. 1814.

"I *am* very glad to hear that you are to be transient from Mayfield so very soon, and was taken in by the first part of your letter.[1] Indeed, for aught I know, you may be treating me, as Slipslop says, with 'ironing' even now. I shall say nothing of the *shock*, which had nothing of *humeur* in it; as I am apt to take even a critic, and still more a friend, at his word, and never to doubt that I have been writing cursed nonsense, if they say so. There was a mental reservation in my pact with the public[2], in behalf of *anonymes;* and, even had there not, the provocation was such as to make it physically impossible to pass over this damnable epoch of triumphant tameness. 'Tis a cursed business; and, after all, I shall think higher of rhyme and reason, and very humbly of your heroic people, till — Elba becomes a volcano, and sends him out again.[3] I can't think it all over yet.

"My departure for the Continent depends, in some measure, on the *in*continent. I have two country invitations at home, and don't know what to say or do. In the mean time, I have bought a macaw and a parrot, and have got up my books; and I box and fence daily, and go out very little.

"At this present writing, Louis the Gouty is wheeling in triumph into Piccadilly, in all the pomp and rabblement of royalty. I had an offer of seats to see them pass; but, as I have seen a Sultan going to mosque, and been at *his* reception of an ambassador, the Most Christian King 'hath no attractions for me:' — though in some coming year of the Hegira, I should not dislike to see the place where he *had* reigned, shortly after the second revolution, and a happy sovereignty of two months, the last six weeks being civil war.

"Pray write, and deem me ever, &c."

LETTER 176. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 21. 1814.

"Many thanks with the letters which I return. You know I am a jacobin, and

[1] I had begun my letter in the following manner: — "Have you seen the 'Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte?' — I suspect it to be either Fitzgerald's or Rosa Matilda's. Those rapid and masterly portraits of all the tyrants that preceded Napoleon have a vigour in them which would incline me to say that Rosa Matilda is the person — but then, on the other hand, that powerful grasp of history," &c. &c. After a little more of this mock parallel, the letter went on thus: — "I should like to know what *you* think of the matter? — Some friends of mine here *will* insist that it is the work of the author of Childe Harold, — but then they are not so well read in Fitzgerald and Rosa Matilda as I am; and, besides, they seem to forget that *you* promised, about a month or two ago, not to write any more for years. Seriously," &c. &c.

I quote this foolish banter merely to show how safely, even on his most sensitive points, one might venture to jest with him.

[2] We find D'Argenson thus encouraging Voltaire to break a similar vow: — "Continue to write without fear for five-and-twenty years longer, but write poetry, notwithstanding your oath in the preface to Newton."

[3] [Buonaparte reached Elba the 4th of May, 1814, and escaped from it on the 26th of February, 1815.]

could not wear white, nor see the installation of Louis the Gouty.

"This is sad news, and very hard upon the sufferers at any, but more at *such* a time — I mean the Bayonne sortie.

"You should urge Moore to come *out*.

"P. S. — I want *Moreri* to purchase for good and all. I have a Bayle, but want Moreri too.

"P. S. — Perry hath a piece of compliment to-day; but I think the *name* might have been as well omitted. [1] No matter; they can but throw the old story of inconsistency in my teeth — let them, — I mean, as to not publishing. However, *now* I will keep my word. Nothing but the occasion, which was *physically* irresistible, made me swerve; and I thought an *anonyme* within my *pact* with the public. It is the only thing I have or shall set about."

LETTER 177. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 25. 1814.

"Let Mr. Gifford have the letter and return it at his leisure. I would have offered it, had I thought that he liked things of the kind.

"Do you want the last page *immediately?* I have doubts about the lines being worth printing; at any rate, I must see them again and alter some passages, before they go forth in any shape into the *ocean* of circulation; — a very conceited phrase, by the by: well then — *channel* of publication will do.

"'I am not i' the vein,' or I could knock off a stanza or three for the Ode, that might answer the purpose better. [2] At all events, I *must* see the lines again *first*, as there be two I have altered in my mind's manuscript already. Has any one seen and judged of them? that is the criterion by which I will abide — only give me a *fair* report, and 'nothing extenuate,' as I will in that case do something else. Ever, &c.

"I want *Moreri*, and an *Athenæus*."

LETTER 178. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 26. 1814.

"I have been thinking that it might be as well to publish no more of the Ode separately, but incorporate it with any of the other things, and include the smaller poem too (in that case) — which I must previously correct, nevertheless. I can't, for the head of me, add a line worth scribbling; my 'vein' is quite gone, and my present occupations are of the gymnastic order — boxing and fencing — and my principal conversation is with my macaw and Bayle. I want my Moreri, and I want Athenæus.

"P. S. — I hope you sent back that poetical packet to the address which I forwarded to you on Sunday: if not, pray do; or I shall have the author screaming after his Epic."

LETTER 179. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 26. 1814.

"I have no guess at your author, — but it is a noble poem [3], and worth a thousand odes of anybody's. I suppose I may keep this copy; — after reading it, I really regret having written my own. I say this very sincerely, albeit unused to think humbly of myself.

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[1] ["Lord Byron has written a very beautiful Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte. The noble poet speaks with becoming indignation of the manner in which the tyrant has borne himself in his fall." — *M. Chron.*]

[2] Mr. Murray had requested of him to make some additions to the Ode, so as to save the stamp duty imposed upon publications not exceeding a single sheet; and he afterwards added, in successive editions, five or six stanzas, the original number being but eleven. There were also three more stanzas, which he never printed, but which, for the just tribute they contain to Washington, are worthy of being preserved: —

"There was a day — there was an hour,
While earth was Gaul's — Gaul thine —
When that immeasurable power
Unsated to resign
Had been an act of purer fame
Than gathers round Marengo's name
And gilded thy decline,
Through the long twilight of all time,
Despite some passing clouds of crime.

"But thou, forsooth, must be a king,
And don the purple vest,
As if that foolish robe could wring
Remembrance from thy breast.
Where is that faded garment? where
The gewgaws thou wert fond to wear,
The star — the string — the crest?
Vain froward child of empire! say,
Are all thy playthings snatch'd away?

"Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the great;
Where neither guilty glory glows,
Nor despicable state?
Yes — one — the first — the last — the best —
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeathed the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but One!"

[3] A Poem by Mr. [now the Rt. Hon. Sir] Stratford Canning, full of spirit and power, entitled "Buonaparte." In a subsequent note to Mr. Murray, Lord Byron says, — "I do not think less highly of 'Buonaparte' for knowing the author. I was aware that he was a man of talent, but did not suspect him of possessing *all* the *family* talents in such perfection."

"I don't like the additional stanzas *at all*, and they had better be left out. The fact is, I can't do any thing I am asked to do, however gladly I *would*; and at the end of a week my interest in a composition goes off. This will account to you for my doing no better for your 'Stamp Duty' postscript.

"The S. R. is very civil — but what do they mean by Childe Harold resembling Marmion? and the next two, Giaour and Bride, *not* resembling Scott? I certainly never intended to copy him; but, if there be any copyism, it must be in the two poems, where the same versification is adopted. However, they exempt The Corsair from all resemblance to any thing, though I rather wonder at his escape.

"If ever I did any thing original, it was in Childe Harold, which *I* prefer to the other things always, after the first week. Yesterday I re-read English Bards; — bating the *malice*, it is the *best*. Ever, &c."

A resolution was, about this time, adopted by him, which, however strange and precipitate it appeared, a knowledge of the previous state of his mind may enable us to account for satisfactorily. He had now, for two years, been drawing upon the admiration of the public with a rapidity and success which seemed to defy exhaustion, — having crowded, indeed, into that brief interval the materials of a long life of fame. But admiration is a sort of impost from which most minds are but too willing to relieve themselves. The eye grows weary of looking up to the same object of wonder, and begins to exchange, at last, the delight of observing its elevation for the less generous pleasure of watching and speculating on its fall. The reputation of Lord Byron had already begun to experience some of these consequences of its own prolonged and constantly renewed splendour. Even among that host of admirers who would have been the last to find fault, there were some not unwilling to repose from praise; while they, who had been from the first reluctant eulogists, took advantage of these apparent symptoms of satiety to indulge in blame. [1]

The loud outcry raised, at the beginning of the present year, by his verses to the Princess Charlotte, had afforded a vent for much of this reserved venom; and the tone of disparagement in which some of his assailants now affected to speak of his poetry was, however absurd and contemptible in itself, precisely that sort of attack which was the most calculated to wound his, at once, proud and diffident spirit. As long as they confined themselves to blackening his moral and social character, so far from offending, their libels rather fell in with his own shadowy style of self-portraiture, and gratified the strange inverted ambition that possessed him. But the slighting opinion which they ventured to express of his genius, — seconded as it was by that inward dissatisfaction with his own powers, which they whose standard of excellence is highest are always the surest to feel, — mortified and disturbed him; and, being the first sound of ill augury that had come across his triumphal career, startled him, as we have seen, into serious doubts of its continuance.

Had he been occupying himself, at the time, with any new task, that confidence in his own energies, which he never truly felt but while in the actual exercise of them, would have enabled him to forget these humiliations of the moment in the glow and excitement of anticipated success. But he had just pledged himself to the world to take a long farewell of poesy, — had sealed up that only fountain from which his heart ever drew refreshment or strength, — and thus was left, idly and helplessly, to brood over the daily taunts of his enemies, without the power of avenging himself when they insulted his person, and but too much disposed to agree with them when they made light of his genius. "I am afraid, (he says, in no-

[1] It was the fear of this sort of back-water current to which so rapid a flow of fame seemed liable, that led some even of his warmest admirers, ignorant as they were yet of the boundlessness of his resources, to tremble a little at the frequency of his appearances before the public. In one of my own letters to him, I find this apprehension thus expressed: — "If you did not write so well, — as the Royal wit observed, — I should say you write too much; at least, too much in the same strain. The Pythagoreans, you know, were of opinion that the reason why we do not hear or heed the music of the heavenly bodies is that they are always sounding in our ears; and I fear that even the influence of *your* song may be diminished by falling upon the world's dull ear too constantly."

The opinion, however, which a great writer of our day (himself one of the few to whom his remark replies) had the generosity, as well as sagacity, to pronounce on this point, at a time when Lord Byron was indulging in the fullest lavishment of his powers, must be regarded, after all, as the most judicious and wise: — "But they cater ill for the public," says Sir Walter Scott, "and give indifferent advice to the poet, supposing him possessed of the highest qualities of his art, who do not advise him to labour while the laurel around his brows yet retains its freshness. Sketches from Lord Byron are more valuable than finished pictures from others; nor are we at all sure that any labour which he might bestow in revisal would not rather efface then refine those outlines of striking and powerful originality which they exhibit when flung rough from the hand of a master." — *Biographical Memoirs, by* Sir W. Scott. [Miscell. Prose Works, vol. iv. p. 361.]

ticing these attacks in one of his letters,) what you call *trash* is plaguily to the purpose, and very good sense into the bargain; and, to tell the truth, for some little time past, I have been myself much of the same opinion."

In this sensitive state of mind,— which he but ill disguised or relieved by an exterior of gay defiance or philosophic contempt, — we can hardly feel surprised that he should have, all at once, come to the resolution, not only of persevering in his determination to write no more in future, but of purchasing back the whole of his past copyrights, and suppressing every page and line he had ever written. On his first mention of this design, Mr. Murray naturally doubted as to its seriousness; but the arrival of the following letter, enclosing a draft for the amount of the copyrights, put his intentions beyond question.

LETTER 180. TO MR. MURRAY.

"2. Albany, April 29. 1814.

"Dear Sir,

"I enclose a draft for the money; when paid, send the copyrights. I release you from the thousand pounds agreed on for The Giaour and Bride, and there's an end.

"If any accident occurs to me, you may do then as you please; but, with the exception of two copies of each for *yourself* only, I expect and request that the advertisements be withdrawn, and the remaining copies of *all* destroyed; and any expense so incurred I will be glad to defray.

"For all this, it might be as well to assign some reason. I have none to give, except my own caprice, and I do not consider the circumstance of consequence enough to require explanation.

"In course, I need hardly assure you that they never shall be published with my consent, directly, or indirectly, by any other person whatsoever, — that I am perfectly satisfied, and have every reason so to be, with your conduct in all transactions between us as publisher and author.

"It will give me great pleasure to preserve your acquaintance, and to consider you as my friend. Believe me very truly, and for much attention,

"Your obliged and very obedient servant,

"BYRON.

"P. S. — I do not think that I have overdrawn at Hammersley's; but if *that* be the case, I can draw for the superflux on Hoare's. The draft is 5*l.* short, but that I will make up. On payment — *not* before — return the copyright papers."

In such a conjuncture, an appeal to his good nature and considerateness was, as Mr. Murray well judged, his best resource; and the following prompt reply will show how easily, and at once, it succeeded.

LETTER 181. TO MR. MURRAY.

"May 1. 1814.

"Dear Sir,

"If your present note is serious, and it really would be inconvenient, there is an end of the matter; tear my draft, and go on as usual: in that case, we will recur to our former basis. That *I* was perfectly *serious*, in wishing to suppress all future publication is true; but certainly not to interfere with the convenience of others, and more particularly your own. Some day, I will tell you the reason of this apparently strange resolution. At present, it may be enough to say that I recall it at your suggestion; and as it appears to have annoyed you, I lose no time in saying so.

"Yours truly,

"B."

CHAPTER XXII.

1814.

THEATRICAL ANECDOTES. — KEAN'S SIR GILES OVERREACH. — SONG, I SPEAK NOT, I TRACE NOT. — SUPPER AT WATIER'S. — LETTERS TO MR. MOORE. — RHYMING EPISTLE. — PROGRESS OF LARA. — HOGG, THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD. — LETTERS TO MR. MOORE AND MR. MURRAY. — PUBLICATION OF LARA, IN CONJUNCTION WITH MR. ROGERS'S JACQUELINE. — SECOND PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE TO MISS MILBANKE.

DURING my stay in town this year, we were almost daily together; and it is in no spirit of flattery to the dead I say, that the more intimately I became acquainted with his disposition and character, the more warmly I felt disposed to take an interest in every thing that concerned him. Not that, in the opportunities thus afforded me of observing more closely his defects, I did not discover much to lament, and not a little to condemn. But there was still, in the neighbourhood of even his worst faults, some atoning good quality, which was always sure, if brought kindly and with management into play, to neutralise their ill effects. The very frankness, indeed, with which he avowed his errors seemed to imply a confidence in his own power of redeeming them, — a consciousness

that he could afford to be sincere. There was also, in such entire unreserve, a pledge that nothing worse remained behind; and the same quality that laid open the blemishes of his nature gave security for its honesty. "The cleanness and purity of one's mind," says Pope, "is never better proved than in discovering its own faults, at first view; as when a stream shows the dirt at its bottom, it shows also the transparency of the water."

The theatre was, at this time, his favourite place of resort. We have seen how enthusiastically he expresses himself on the subject of Mr. Kean's acting, and it was frequently my good fortune, during this season, to share in his enjoyment of it,—the orchestra being, more than once, the place where, for a nearer view of the actor's countenance, we took our station. For Kean's benefit, on the 25th of May, a large party had been made by Lady J** [Jersey [1]], to which we both belonged; but Lord Byron having also taken a box for the occasion, so anxious was he to enjoy the representation uninterrupted, that, by rather an unsocial arrangement, only himself and I occupied his box during the play, while every other in the house was crowded almost to suffocation; nor did we join the remainder of our friends till supper. Between the two parties, however, Mr. Kean had no reason to complain of a want of homage to his talents; as Lord Jersey, on that occasion, presented him with a hundred pound share in the theatre; while Lord Byron sent him, next day, the sum of fifty guineas [2]; and, not long after, on seeing him act some of his favourite parts, made him presents of a handsome snuff-box [3] and a costly Turkish sword.

Such effect had the passionate energy of Kean's acting on his mind, that, once, in seeing him play Sir Giles Overreach, he was so affected as to be seized with a sort of convulsive fit; and we shall find him, some years after, in Italy, when the representation of Alfieri's tragedy of Mirra had agitated him in the same violent manner, comparing the two instances as the only ones in his life when "any thing under reality" had been able to move him so powerfully.

The following are a few of the notes which I received from him during this visit to town.

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 4. 1814.

"Last night we supp'd at R——fe's [4] board, &c. [5]

"I wish people would not shirk their *dinners*— ought it not to have been a dinner? [6]— and that d—d anchovy sandwich!

"That plaguy voice of yours made me sentimental, and almost fall in love with a girl who was recommending herself, during your song, by *hating* music. But the song is past, and my passion can wait, till the *pucelle* is more harmonious.

"Do you go to Lady Jersey's to-night? It is a large party, and you won't be bored into 'softening rocks,' and all that. Othello is to-morrow and Saturday too. Which day shall we go? When shall I see you? If you call, let it be after three, and as near four as you please.

"Ever, &c."

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 4. 1814.

"Dear Tom,

"Thou hast asked me for a song, and I enclose you an experiment, which has cost me something more than trouble, and is, therefore, less likely to be worth your taking any in your proposed setting. [7] Now, if it be so, throw it into the fire without *phrase*.

"Ever yours,

"Byron."

[1] [Sarah-Sophia, daughter of the Earl of Westmoreland. She was married to the Earl of Jersey in 1804.]

[2] To such lengths did he, at this time, carry his enthusiasm for Kean, that when Miss O'Neil soon after appeared, and, by her matchless representation of feminine tenderness, attracted all eyes and hearts, he was not only a little jealous of her reputation, as interfering with that of his favourite, but, in order to guard himself against the risk of becoming a convert, refused to go to see her act. I endeavoured sometimes to persuade him into witnessing, at least, one of her performances; but his answer was, (punning upon Shakspeare's word, "unanealed,") "No— I'm resolved to continue *un-Oneiled*."

To the great queen of all actresses, however, it will be seen, by the following extract from one of his journals, he rendered due justice:— "Of actors Cooke was the most natural, Kemble the most supernatural, Kean the medium between the two. But Mrs. Siddons was worth them all put together."— *Detached Thoughts*.

[3] ["This box," says Mr. Proctor, "was of gold, having a boar-hunt on the top wrought in mosaic. It was presented to Kean by Mr. Merivale, to whom the actor's family were indebted for many friendly attentions. The tragedian took the boar for his crest; not because of the boar-hunt, but because it was the ensign of our third Richard."— *Life of Kean*, vol. ii. p. 131.]

[4] [George-Augustus-Henry-Anne Parkyns, second Baron Rancliffe.]

[5] An epigram here followed, which, as founded on a scriptural allusion, I thought it better to omit.

[6] We had been invited by Lord R. to dine *after* the play,—an arrangement which, from its novelty, delighted Lord Byron exceedingly. The dinner, however, afterwards dwindled into a mere supper, and this change was long a subject of jocular resentment with him.

[7] I had begged of him to write something for me to set to music.

"I speak not, I trace not, I breathe not thy name,
There is grief in the sound, there is guilt in the fame;
But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart
The deep thoughts that dwell in that silence of heart.

"Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace
Were those hours — can their joy or their bitterness cease?
We repent—we abjure—we will break from our chain—
We will part, — we will fly to — unite it again!

"Oh! thine be the gladness, and mine be the guilt!
Forgive me, adored one! — forsake, if thou wilt; —
But the heart which is thine shall expire undebased,
And *man* shall not break it — whatever *thou* may'st.

"And stern to the haughty, but humble to thee,
This soul, in its bitterest blackness, shall be;
And our days seem as swift, and our moments more sweet,
With thee by my side, than with worlds at our feet.

"One sigh of thy sorrow, one look of thy love,
Shall turn me or fix, shall reward or reprove;
And the heartless may wonder at all I resign —
Thy lip shall reply, not to them, but to *mine*."

TO MR. MOORE.

"Will you and Rogers come to my box at Covent, then? I shall be there, and none else — or I won't be there, if you *twain* would like to go without me. You will not get so good a place hustling among the publican *boxers*, with damnable apprentices (six feet high) on a back row. Will you both oblige me and come, — or one — or neither — or, what you will?

"P. S. — An' you will, I will call for you at half-past six, or any time of your own dial."

TO MR. MOORE.

"I have gotten a box for Othello to-night, and send the ticket for your friends the Rancliffes. I seriously recommend to you to recommend to them to go for half an hour, if only to see the third act — they will not easily have another opportunity. We — at least, I — cannot be there, so there will be no one in their way. Will you give or send it to them? it will come with a better grace from you than me.

"I am in no good plight, but will dine at * *'s with you, if I can. There is music and Covent-g.

"Will you go, at all events, to my box there afterwards, to see a *début* of a young 16[1] in the 'Child of Nature?'"

TO MR. MOORE.

"Sunday matin.

"Was not Iago perfection? particularly the last look. I was *close* to him (in the orchestra), and never saw an English countenance half so expressive.

"I am acquainted with no *im*material sensuality so delightful as good acting; and, as it is fitting there should be good plays, now and then, besides Shakspeare's, I wish you or Campbell would write one: — the rest of 'us youth' have not heart enough.

"You were cut up in the Champion — is it not so? this day so am I — even to *shocking* the editor. The critic writes well; and as, at present, poesy is not my passion predominant, and my snake of Aaron has swallowed up all the other serpents, I don't feel fractious. I send you the paper, which I mean to take in for the future. We go to M.'s together. Perhaps I shall see you before, but don't let me *bore* you, now nor ever.

"Ever, as now, truly and affectionately, &c."

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 5. 1814.

"Do you go to the Lady Cahir's[2] this even? If you do go — and whenever we are bound to the same follies — let us embark in the same 'Shippe of Fooles.' I have been up till five, and up at nine; and feel heavy with only winking for the last three or four nights.

"I lost my party and place at supper trying to keep out of the way of * * * *. I would have gone away altogether, but that would have appeared a worse affectation than t'other. You are of course engaged to dinner, or we may go quietly together to my box at Covent Garden, and afterwards to this assemblage. Why did you go away so soon?

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. — *Ought not* Rancliffe's supper to have been a dinner? Jackson is here, and I must fatigue myself into spirits."

TO MR. MOORE.

"May 18. 1814.

"Thanks — and punctuality. *What* has passed at * * * *'s House? I suppose that *I* am to know, and 'pars fui' of the conference. I regret that your * * * *s will

[1] Miss Foote's first appearance, which we witnessed together. [In April, 1831, Miss Foote became Countess of Harrington.]

[2] [Emily, daughter of James St. John Jeffreys, Esq. of Blarney Castle, co. Cork. In 1816, Lord Cahir was advanced to the dignity of Earl of Glengall.]

detain you so late, but I suppose you will be at Lady Jersey's. I am going earlier with Hobhonse. You recollect that to-morrow we sup and see Kean.

"P. S. — *Two* to-morrow is the hour of pugilism."

The supper to which he here looks forward, took place at Watier's, of which club he had lately become a member; and, as it may convey some idea of his irregular mode of diet, and thus account, in part, for the frequent derangement of his health, I shall here attempt, from recollection, a description of his supper on this occasion. We were to have been joined by Lord Rancliffe, who however did not arrive, and the party accordingly consisted but of ourselves. Having taken upon me to order the repast, and knowing that Lord Byron, for the last two days, had done nothing towards sustenance, beyond eating a few biscuits and (to appease appetite) chewing mastic, I desired that we should have a good supply of, at least, two kinds of fish. My companion, however, confined himself to lobsters, and of these finished two or three, to his own share, — interposing, sometimes, a small liqueur-glass of strong white brandy, sometimes a tumbler of very hot water, and then pure brandy again, to the amount of near half a dozen small glasses of the latter, without which, alternately with the hot water, he appeared to think the lobster could not be digested. After this, we had claret, of which having despatched two bottles between us, at about four o'clock in the morning we parted.

As Pope has thought his "delicious lobster-nights" worth commemorating, these particulars of one in which Lord Byron was concerned may also have some interest.

Among other nights of the same description which I had the happiness of passing with him, I remember once, in returning home from some assembly at rather a late hour, we saw lights in the windows of his old haunt Stevens's, in Bond Street, and agreed to stop there and sup. On entering, we found an old friend of his, Sir Godfrey Webster, who joined our party, and the lobsters and brandy and water being put in requisition, it was (as usual on such occasions) broad daylight before we separated.

LETTER 182. TO MR. MOORE.

"May 23. 1814.

"I must send you the Java government gazette of July 3d, 1813, just sent to me by Murray. Only think of *our* (for it is you and I) setting paper warriors in array in the Indian seas. Does not this sound like fame — something almost like *posterity?* It is something to have scribblers squabbling about us 5000 miles off, while we are agreeing so well at home. Bring it with you in your pocket; — it will make you laugh, as it hath me. Ever yours, "B.

"P. S. — Oh the anecdote!" * * *

To the circumstance mentioned in this letter he recurs more than once in the Journals which he kept abroad; as thus, in a passage of his "Detached Thoughts," — where it will be perceived that, by a trifling lapse of memory, he represents himself as having produced this gazette, for the first time, on our way to dinner.

"In the year 1814, as Moore and I were going to dine with Lord Grey in Portman Square, I pulled out a 'Java Gazette' (which Murray had sent to me), in which there was a controversy on our respective merits as poets. It was amusing enough that we should be proceeding peaceably to the same table while they were squabbling about us in the Indian seas (to be sure the paper was dated six months before), and filling columns with Batavian criticism. But this is fame, I presume."

The following poem, written about this time, and, apparently, for the purpose of being recited at the Caledonian Meeting, I insert principally on account of the warm feeling which it breathes towards Scotland and her sons: —

"Who hath not glow'd above the page where Fame
Hath fix'd high Caledon's unconquer'd name;
The mountain-land which spurn'd the Roman chain,
And baffled back the fiery-crested Dane,
Whose bright claymore and hardihood of hand
No foe could tame — no tyrant could command.

"That race is gone — but still their children breathe,
And glory crowns them with redoubled wreath:
O'er Gael and Saxon mingling banners shine,
And, England! add their stubborn strength to thine.
The blood which flow'd with Wallace flows as free,
But now 'tis only shed for fame and thee!
Oh! pass not by the Northern veteran's claim,
But give support — the world hath given him fame!

"The humbler ranks, the lowly brave, who bled
While cheerly following where the mighty led —
Who sleep beneath the undistinguish'd sod
Where happier comrades in their triumph trod,
To us bequeath — 'tis all their fate allows —
The sireless offspring and the lonely spouse:
She on high Albyn's dusky hills may raise
The tearful eye in melancholy gaze,
Or view, while shadowy auguries disclose
The Highland seer's anticipated woes,

The bleeding phantom of each martial form
Dim in the cloud, or darkling in the storm;
While sad, she chants the solitary song,
The soft lament for him who tarries long —
For him, whose distant relics vainly crave
The coronach's wild requiem to the brave!

"'Tis Heaven — not man — must charm away the woe
Which bursts when Nature's feelings newly flow:
Yet tenderness and time may rob the tear
Of half its bitterness for one so dear:
A nation's gratitude perchance may spread
A thornless pillow for the widow'd head;
May lighten well her heart's maternal care,
And wean from penury the soldier's heir."

LETTER 183. TO MR. MOORE.

"May 31. 1814.

"As I shall probably not see you here to-day, I write to request that, if not inconvenient to yourself, you will stay in town till *Sunday;* if not to gratify me, yet to please a great many others, who will be very sorry to lose you. As for myself, I can only repeat that I wish you would either remain a long time with us, or not come at all; for these *snatches* of society make the subsequent separations bitterer than ever.

"I believe you think that I have not been quite fair with that Alpha and Omega of beauty, &c. with whom you would willingly have united me. But if you consider what her sister said on the subject, you will less wonder that my pride should have taken the alarm; particularly as nothing but the every-day flirtation of every-day people ever occurred between your heroine and myself. Had Lady * * appeared to wish it — or even *not* to oppose it — I would have gone on, and very possibly married (that is, *if* the other had been equally accordant) with the same indifference which has frozen over the 'Black Sea' of almost all my passions. It is that very indifference which makes me so uncertain and apparently capricious. It is not eagerness of new pursuits, but that nothing impresses me sufficiently to *fix;* neither do I feel disgusted, but simply indifferent to almost all excitements. The proof of this is, that obstacles, the slightest even, *stop* me. This can hardly be *timidity,* for I have done some impudent things too, in my time; and in almost all cases, opposition is a stimulus. In mine, it is not; if a straw were in my way, I could not stoop to pick it up.

"I have sent this long tirade, because I would not have you suppose that I have been *trifling* designedly with you or others. If you think so, in the name of St. Hubert (the patron of antlers and hunters) let me be married out of hand — I don't care to whom, so it amuses any body else, and don't interfere with me much in the day time.

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 184. TO MR. MOORE.

"June 14. 1814.

"I *could* be very sentimental now, but I won't. The truth is, that I have been all my life trying to harden my heart, and have not yet quite succeeded — though there are great hopes — and you do not know how it sunk with your departure. What adds to my regret is having seen so little of you during your stay in this crowded desert, where one ought to be able to bear thirst like a camel, — the springs are so few, and most of them so muddy.

"The newspapers will tell you all that is to be told of emperors, &c.[1] They have dined, and supped, and shown their flat faces in all thoroughfares, and several saloons. Their uniforms are very becoming, but rather short in the skirts; and their conversation is a catechism, for which and the answers I refer you to those who have heard it.

"I think of leaving town for Newstead soon. If so, I shall not be remote from your recess, and (unless Mrs. M. detains you at home over the caudle-cup and a new cradle) we will meet. You shall come to

[1] In a few days after this, he sent me a long rhyming epistle full of jokes and pleasantries upon every thing and every one around him, of which the following are the only parts producible: —

"'What say *I?*' — not a syllable further in prose;
I'm your man 'of all measures,' dear Tom, — so, here goes!
Here goes, for a swim on the stream of old Time,
On those buoyant supporters the bladders of rhyme.
If our weight breaks them down, and we sink in the flood,
We are smother'd, at least, in respectable mud,
Where the divers of bathos lie drown'd in a heap,
And Southey's last pæan has pillow'd his sleep; —
That 'felo de se' who, half drunk with his malmsey,
Walk'd out of his depth and was lost in a calm sea,
Singing 'Glory to God' in a spick-and-span stanza,
The like (since Tom Sternhold was choked) never man saw.

"The papers have told you, no doubt, of the fusses,
The fêtes, and the gapings to get at these Russes —
Of his Majesty's suite, up from coachman to Hetman, —
And what dignity decks the flat face of the great man.
I saw him, last week, at two balls and a party, —
For a prince, his demeanour was rather too hearty.
You know, *we* are used to quite different graces,
* * * * * * *
The Czar's look, I own, was much brighter and brisker,
But then he is sadly deficient in whisker;
And wore but a starless blue coat, and in kersey-mere breeches whisk'd round in a waltz with the J * *,
Who, lovely as ever, seem'd just as delighted
With majesty's presence as those she invited."

me, or I to you, as you like it ; — but *meet* we will. An invitation from Aston has reached me, but I do not think I shall go. I have also heard of * * * — I should like to see her again, for I have not met her for years ; and though 'the light that ne'er can shine again' is set, I do not know that 'one dear smile like those of old' might not make me for a moment forget the 'dulness' of 'life's stream.'

"I am going to R * *'s to-night — to one of those suppers which '*ought* to be dinners.' I have hardly seen her, and never *him*, since you set out. I told you, you were the last link of that chain. As for * *, we have not syllabled one another's names since. The post will not permit me to continue my scrawl. More anon.

"Ever, dear Moore, &c.

"P. S. — Keep the Journal[1] ; I care not what becomes of it ; and if it has amused you, I am glad that I kept it. 'Lara' is finished, and I am copying him for my third vol., now collecting ; — but *no separate* publication."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"June 14. 1814.

"I return your packet of this morning. Have you heard that Bertrand has returned to Paris with the account of Napoleon's having lost his senses? It is a *report;* but, if true, I must, like Mr. Fitzgerald and Jeremiah (of lamentable memory), lay claim to prophecy ; that is to say, of saying, that he *ought* to go out of his senses, in the penultimate stanza of a certain Ode[2], — the which, having been pronounced *nonsense* by several profound critics, has a still further pretension, by its unintelligibility, to inspiration. "Ever, &c."

LETTER 185. TO MR. ROGERS.

"June 9. 1814.

"I am always obliged to trouble you with my awkwardnesses, and now I have a fresh one. Mr. W.[3] called on me several times, and I have missed the honour of making his acquaintance, which I regret, but which *you*, who know my desultory and uncertain habits, will not wonder at, and will, I am sure, attribute to any thing but a wish to offend a person who has shown me much kindness, and possesses character and talents entitled to general respect. My mornings are late, and passed in fencing and boxing, and a variety of most unpoetical exercises, very wholesome, &c., but would be very disagreeable to my friends, whom I am obliged to exclude during their operation. I never go out till the evening, and I have not been fortunate enough to meet Mr. W. at Lord Lansdowne's or Lord Jersey's, where I had hoped to pay him my respects.

"I would have written to him, but a few words from you will go further than all the apologetical sesquipedalities I could muster on the occasion. It is only to say that, without intending it, I contrive to behave very ill to every body, and am very sorry for it.

"Ever, dear R., &c."

The following undated notes to Mr. Rogers must have been written about the same time : —

"Sunday.

"Your non-attendance at Corinne's is very *à propos*, as I was on the eve of sending you an excuse. I do not feel well enough to go there this evening, and have been obliged to despatch an apology. I believe I need not add one for not accepting Mr. Sheridan's invitation on Wednesday, which I fancy both you and I understood in the same sense : — with him the saying of Mirabeau, that '*words* are *things*,' is not to be taken literally.

"Ever, &c."

"I will call for you at a quarter before *seven*, if that will suit you. I return you Sir Proteus[4], and shall merely add in return, as Johnson said of, and to, somebody or other, 'Are we alive after all this censure?'

"Believe me, &c."

"Tuesday.

"Sheridan was yesterday, at first, too sober to remember your invitation, but in the dregs of the third bottle he fished up his memory. The Stael out-talked Whitbread, was *ironed* by Sheridan, confounded Sir Humphry, and utterly perplexed your slave. The rest (great names in the red book,

[1] The Journal from which I have given extracts in the preceding pages.

[2] ["Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth —
So long obey'd — so little worth!" *Works*, p. 462.]

[3] [The Rev. Francis (afterwards Archdeacon) Wrangham, author of "Sermons, Practical and Occasional," "Poems," the "British Plutarch," the "Lyrics of Horace translated," &c. &c.]

[4] A satirical pamphlet, in which all the writers of the day were attacked. [Entitled, "Sir Proteus : a Satirical Ballad, by P. M. O'Donovan, Esq."]

nevertheless,) were mere segments of the circle. Ma'mselle danced a Russ saraband with great vigour, grace, and expression.

"Ever, &c."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"June 21. 1814.

"I suppose 'Lara' is gone to the devil, — which is no great matter, only let me know, that I may be saved the trouble of copying the rest, and put the first part into the fire. I really have no anxiety about it, and shall not be sorry to be saved the copying, which goes on very slowly, and may prove to you that you may *speak out* — or I should be less sluggish. "Yours, &c."

LETTER 186. TO MR. ROGERS.

"June 27. 1814.

"You could not have made me a more acceptable present than Jacqueline, — she is all grace and softness, and poetry; there is so much of the last, that we do not feel the want of story, which is simple, yet *enough*. I wonder that you do not oftener unbend to more of the same kind. I have some sympathy with the *softer* affections, though very little in *my* way, and no one can depict them so truly and successfully as yourself. I have half a mind to pay you in kind, or rather *un*kind, for I have just 'supped full of horror' in two cantos of darkness and dismay.

"Do you go to Lord Essex's to-night? if so, will you let me call for you at your own hour? I dined with Holland-house yesterday at Lord Cowper's; my Lady very gracious, which she can be more than any one when she likes. I was not sorry to see them again, for I can't forget that they have been very kind to me.

"Ever yours most truly,

"BN.

"P. S. — Is there any chance or possibility of making it up with Lord Carlisle, as I feel disposed to do any thing reasonable or unreasonable to effect it? I would before, but for the 'Courier,' and the possible misconstructions at such a time. Perpend, pronounce."

On my return to London, for a short time, at the beginning of July, I found his poem of 'Lara,' which he had begun at the latter end of May, in the hands of the printer, and nearly ready for publication. He had, before I left town, repeated to me, as we were on our way to some evening party, the first one hundred and twenty lines of the poem, which he had written the day before, — at the same time giving me a general sketch of the characters and the story.

His short notes to Mr. Murray, during the printing of this work, are of the same impatient and whimsical character as those, of which I have already given specimens, in my account of his preceding publications: but, as matter of more interest now presses upon us, I shall forbear from transcribing them at length. In one of them he says, "I have just corrected some of the most horrible blunders that ever crept into a proof:" — in another, "I hope the next proof will be better; this was one which would have consoled Job, if it had been of his 'enemy's book:'" — a third contains only the following words: "Dear sir, you demanded more *battle* — there it is. Yours, &c."

The two letters that immediately follow were addressed to me, at this time, in town.

LETTER 187. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 8. 1814.

"I returned to town last night, and had some hopes of seeing you to-day, and would have called, — but I have been (though in exceeding distempered good health) a little head-achy with free living, as it is called, and am now at the freezing point of returning soberness. Of course, I should be sorry that our parallel lines did not deviate into intersection before you return to the country, — after that same nonsuit[1], whereof the papers have told us, — but, as you must be much occupied, I won't be affronted, should your time and business militate against our meeting.

"Rogers and I have almost coalesced into a joint invasion of the public. Whether it will take place or not, I do not yet know, and I am afraid Jacqueline (which is very beautiful) will be in bad company.[2] But in this case, the lady will not be the sufferer.

"I am going to the sea, and then to Scotland; and I have been doing nothing, — that is, no good, — and am very truly, &c."

[1] He alludes to an action for piracy brought by Mr. Power (the publisher of my musical works), to the trial of which I had been summoned as a witness.

[2] Lord Byron afterwards proposed that I should make a third in this publication; but the honour was a perilous one, and I begged leave to decline it.

LETTER 188. TO MR. MOORE.

"I suppose, by your non-appearance, that the philasophy of my note, and the previous silence of the writer, have put or kept you in *humeur*. Never mind — it is hardly worth while.

"This day have I received information from my man of law of the *non* — and never likely to be — performance of purchase by Mr. Claughton, of *im*pecuniary memory. He don't know what to do, or when to pay; and so all my hopes and worldly projects and prospects are gone to the devil. He (the purchaser, and the devil too, for aught I care), and I, and my legal advisers, are to meet to-morrow, the said purchaser having first taken special care to inquire 'whether I would meet him with temper?' — Certainly. The question is this — I shall either have the estate back, which is as good as ruin, or I shall go on with him dawdling, which is rather worse. I have brought my pigs to a Mussulman market. If I had but a wife now, and children, of whose paternity I entertained doubts, I should be happy, or rather fortunate, as Candide or Scarmentado. In the mean time, if you don't come and see me, I shall think that Sam.'s bank is broke too; and that you, having assets there, are despairing of more than a piastre in the pound for your dividend. Ever, &c."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 18. 1814.

"You shall have one of the pictures. I wish you to send the proof of 'Lara' to Mr. Moore, 33. Bury Street, *to-night*, as he leaves town to-morrow, and wishes to see it before he goes[1]; and I am also willing to have the benefit of his remarks. Yours, &c."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 18. 1814.

"I think *you* will be satisfied even to *repletion* with our northern friends[2], and I won't deprive you longer of what I think will give you pleasure; for my own part, my modesty, or my vanity, must be silent.

"P. S.—If you could spare it for an hour in the evening, I wish you to send it up to Mrs. Leigh, your neighbour, at the London Hotel, Albemarle Street."

LETTER 189. TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 23. 1814.

"I am sorry to say that the print[3] is by no means approved of by those who have seen it, who are pretty conversant with the original, as well as the picture from whence it is taken. I rather suspect that it is from the *copy*, and not the *exhibited* portrait, and in this dilemma would recommend a suspension, if not an abandonment, of the *prefixion* to the volumes which you purpose inflicting upon the public.

"With regard to *Lara*, don't be in any hurry. I have not yet made up my mind on the subject, nor know what to think or do till I hear from you; and Mr. Moore appeared to me in a similar state of indetermination. I do not know that it may not be better to *reserve* it for the *entire* publication you proposed, and not adventure in hardy singleness, or even backed by the fairy Jacqueline. I have been seized with all kinds of doubts, &c. &c. since I left London.

"Pray let me hear from you, and believe me, &c."

LETTER 190. TO MR. MURRAY.

"July 24. 1814.

"The minority must, in this case, carry it, so pray let it be so, for I don't care sixpence for any of the opinions you mention, on such a subject: and P * * [Phillips] must be a dunce to agree with them. For my own part, I have no objection at all; but Mrs. Leigh and my cousin must be better judges of the likeness than others; and they hate it; and so I won't have it at all.

"Mr. Hobhouse is right as for his conclusion: but I deny the premises. The name only is Spanish[4]; the country is not Spain, but the Morea.

"Waverley is the best and most interesting novel I have redde since — I don't know when. I like it as much as I hate 'Patronage,' and the 'Wanderer,' and 'O'Donnell,' and all the feminine trash of the last four months. Besides, it is all easy to me, because I have been in Scotland so much (though then young enough too), and feel at home with the people, Lowland and Gael.

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[1] In a note which I wrote to him, before starting, next day, I find the following: — "I got Lara at three o'clock this morning — read him before I slept, and was enraptured. I take the proofs with me."

[2] He here refers to an article in No. 45. of the Edinburgh Review, just then published, on The Corsair and Bride of Abydos.

[3] An engraving by Agar from Phillips's portrait of him.

[4] Alluding to Lara.

"A note will correct what Mr. Hobhouse thinks an error (about the feudal system in Spain); — it is *not* Spain. If he puts a few words of prose any where, it will set all right.

"I have been ordered to town to vote. I shall disobey. There is no good in so much prating, since 'certain issues strokes should arbitrate.' If you have any thing to say, let me hear from you.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 191. TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 3. 1814.

"It is certainly a little extraordinary that you have not sent the Edinburgh Review, as I requested, and hoped it would not require a note a day to remind you. I see *advertisements* of Lara and Jacqueline; pray, *why?* when I requested you to postpone publication till my return to town.

"I have a most amusing epistle from the Ettrick bard — Hogg; in which, speaking of his bookseller, whom he denominates the 'shabbiest' of the *trade* for not 'lifting his bills,' he adds, in so many words, 'G—d d—n him and them both.' This is a pretty prelude to asking you to adopt him (the said Hogg); but this he wishes; and if you please, you and I will talk it over. He has a poem ready for the press (and your *bills* too, if '*lift*able'), and bestows some benedictions on Mr. Moore for his abduction of Lara from the forthcoming Miscellany.[1]

"P. S. — Sincerely, I think Mr. Hogg would suit you very well; and surely he is a man of great powers, and deserving of encouragement. I must knock out a Tale for him, and you should at all events consider before you reject his suit. Scott is gone to the Orkneys in a gale of wind; and Hogg says that, during the said gale, 'he is sure that Scott is not quite at his ease, to say the best of it.' Ah! I wish these home-keeping bards could taste a Mediterranean white squall, or 'the Gut' in a gale of wind, or even the 'Bay of Biscay' with no wind at all."

LETTER 192. TO MR. MOORE.

"Hastings, August 3. 1814.

"By the time this reaches your dwelling, I shall (God wot) be in town again probably. I have been here renewing my acquaintance with my old friend Ocean; and I find his bosom as pleasant a pillow for an hour in the morning as his daughters of Paphos could be in the twilight. I have been swimming and eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies and silk handkerchiefs, — and listening to my friend Hodgson's raptures about a pretty wife-elect of his, — and walking on cliffs, and tumbling down hills, and making the most of the 'dolce far-niente' for the last fortnight. I met a son of Lord Erskine's, who says he has been married a year, and is the 'happiest of men;' and I have met the aforesaid H., who is also the 'happiest of men;' so, it is worth while being here, if only to witness the superlative felicity of these foxes, who have cut off their tails, and would persuade the rest to part with their brushes to keep them in countenance.

"It rejoiceth me that you like 'Lara.' Jeffrey is out with his 45th Number, which I suppose you have got. He is only too kind to me, in my share of it, and I begin to fancy myself a golden pheasant, upon the strength of the plumage wherewith he hath bedecked me. But then, 'surgit amari,' &c. — the gentlemen of the Champion, and Perry, have got hold (I know not how) of the condolatory address to Lady Jersey on the picture-abduction by our Regent, and have published them — with my name, too, smack — without even asking leave, or inquiring whether or no! D—n their impudence, and d—n every thing. It has put me out of patience, and so, I shall say no more about it.

"You shall have Lara and Jacque (both with some additions) when out; but I am still demurring and delaying, and in a fuss, and so is Rogers in his way.

"Newstead is to be mine again. Claughton forfeits twenty-five thousand pounds; but that don't prevent me from being very prettily ruined. I mean to bury myself there — and let my beard grow — and hate you all.

"Oh! I have had the most amusing letter from Hogg, the Ettick minstrel and shepherd. He wants me to recommend him to Murray; and, speaking of his present bookseller, whose 'bills' are never 'lifted,' he adds, *totidem verbis*, 'God d—n him and them both.' I laughed, and so would you too, at the way in which this execration is introduced. The said Hogg is a strange

[1] Mr. Hogg had been led to hope that he should be permitted to insert this poem in a Miscellany which he had at this time some thoughts of publishing; and whatever advice I may have given against such a mode of disposing of the work arose certainly not from any ill will to this ingenious and remarkable man, but from a consideration of what I thought most advantageous to the fame of Lord Byron.

being, but of great, though uncouth, powers. I think very highly of him, as a poet; but he, and half of these Scotch and Lake troubadours, are spoilt by living in little circles and petty societies. London and the world is the only place to take the conceit out of a man — in the milling phrase. Scott, he says, is gone to the Orkneys in a gale of wind; — during which wind, he affirms, the said Scott, 'he is sure, is not at his ease, — to say the best of it.' Lord, Lord, if these home-keeping minstrels had crossed your Atlantic or my Mediterranean, and tasted a little open boating in a white squall — or a gale in 'the Gut' — or the 'Bay of Biscay,' with no gale at all — how it would enliven and introduce them to a few of the sensations! — to say nothing of an illicit amour or two upon shore, in the way of essay upon the Passions, beginning with simple adultery, and compounding it as they went along.

"I have forwarded your letter to Murray, — by the way, you had addressed it to *Miller*. Pray write to me, and say what art thou doing? 'Not finished!' — Oons! how is this? — these 'flaws and starts' must be 'authorised by your grandam,' and are unbecoming of any other author. I was sorry to hear of your discrepancy with the **s, or rather your abjuration of agreement. I don't want to be impertinent, or buffoon on a serious subject, and am therefore at a loss what to say.

"I hope nothing will induce you to abate from the proper price of your poem, as long as there is a prospect of getting it. For my own part, I have *seriously* and *not whiningly* (for that is not my way — at least, it used not to be) neither hopes, nor prospects, and scarcely even wishes. I am, in some respects, happy, but not in a manner that can or ought to last, — but enough of that. The worst of it is, I feel quite enervated and indifferent. I really do not know, if Jupiter were to offer me my choice of the contents of his benevolent cask, what I would pick out of it. If I was born, as the nurses say, with a 'silver spoon in my mouth,' it has stuck in my throat, and spoiled my palate, so that nothing put into it is swallowed with much relish, — unless it be cayenne. However, I have grievances enough to occupy me that way too; — but for fear of adding to yours by this pestilent long diatribe, I postpone the reading of them, *sine die*.

"Ever, dear M., yours, &c.

"P. S. — Don't forget my godson. You could not have fixed on a fitter porter for his sins than me, being used to carry double without inconvenience."

LETTER 193. TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 4. 1814.

"Not having received the slightest answer to my last three letters, nor the book (the last number of the Edinburgh Review) which they requested, I presume that you were the unfortunate person who perished in the pagoda on Monday last, and address this rather to your executors than yourself, regretting that you should have had the ill luck to be the sole victim on that joyous occasion.

"I beg leave, then, to inform these gentlemen (whoever they may be) that I am a little surprised at the previous neglect of the deceased, and also at observing an advertisement of an approaching publication on Saturday next, against the which I protested, and do protest for the present.

"Yours (or theirs), &c.

"B."

LETTER 194. TO MR. MURRAY.

"August 5. 1814.

"The Edinburgh Review is arrived — thanks. I enclose Mr. Hobhouse's letter, from which you will perceive the work you have made. However, I have done: you must send my rhymes to the devil your own way. It seems, also, that the 'faithful and spirited likeness' is another of your publications. I wish you joy of it; but it is no likeness — that is the point. Seriously, if I have delayed your journey to Scotland, I am sorry that you carried your complaisance so far; particularly as upon trifles you have a more summary method; — witness the grammar of Hobhouse's 'bit of prose,' which has put him and me into a fever.

"Hogg must translate his own words: '*lifting*' is a quotation from his letter, together with 'God d—n,' &c., which I suppose requires no translation.

"I was unaware of the contents of Mr. Moore's letter; I think your offer very handsome, but of that you and he must judge. If he can get more, you won't wonder that he should accept it.

"Out with Lara, since it must be. The tome looks pretty enough — on the outside. I shall be in town next week, and in the mean time wish you a pleasant journey.

"Yours, &c.

"B."

LETTER 195. TO MR. MOORE.

"August 12. 1814.

"I was *not* alone, nor will be while I can help it. Newstead is not yet decided. Claughton is to make a grand effort by Saturday week to complete, — if not, he must give up twenty-five thousand pounds and the estate, with expenses, &c. &c. If I resume the Abbacy, you shall have due notice, and a cell set apart for your reception, with a pious welcome. Rogers I have not seen, but Larry and Jacky came out a few days ago. Of their effect I know nothing.

"There is something very amusing in *your* being an Edinburgh Reviewer. You know, I suppose, that Thurlow [1] is none of the placidest, and may possibly enact some tragedy on being told that he is only a fool. If, now, Jeffrey were to be slain on account of an article of yours, there would be a fine conclusion. For my part, as Mrs. Winifred Jenkins says, 'he has done the handsome thing by me, particularly in his last number; so, he is the best of men and the ablest of critics, and I won't have him killed — though I dare say many wish he were, for being so good-humoured.

"Before I left Hastings I got in a passion with an ink-bottle, which I flung out of the window one night with a vengeance; — and what then? Why, next morning I was horrified by seeing that it had struck, and split upon, the petticoat of Euterpe's graven image in the garden, and grimed her as if it were on purpose. [2] Only think of my distress, — and the epigrams that might be engendered on the Muse and her misadventure.

"I had an adventure almost as ridiculous, at some private theatricals near Cambridge — though of a different description — since I saw you last. I quarrelled with a man in the dark for asking me who I was (insolently enough to be sure), and followed him into the green-room (a *stable*) in a rage, amongst a set of people I never saw before. He turned out to be a low comedian, engaged to act with the amateurs, and to be a civil-spoken man enough, when he found out that nothing very pleasant was to be got by rudeness. But you would have been amused with the row, and the dialogue, and the dress — or rather the undress — of the party, where I had introduced myself in a devil of a hurry, and the astonishment that ensued. I had gone out of the theatre, for coolness, into the garden; — there I had tumbled over some dogs, and, coming away from them in very ill humour, encountered the man in a worse, which produced all this confusion.

"Well — and why don't you 'launch?' — Now is your time. The people are tolerably tired with me, and not very much enamoured of Wordsworth [3], who has just spawned a quarto of metaphysical blank verse, which is nevertheless only a part of a poem.

"Murray talks of divorcing Larry and Jacky — a bad sign for the authors, who, I suppose, will be divorced too, and throw the blame upon one another. Seriously, I don't care a cigar about it, and I don't see why Sam should.

"Let me hear from and of you and my godson. If a daughter, the name will do quite as well.

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 196. TO MR. MOORE.

"August 13. 1814.

"I wrote yesterday to Mayfield, and have just now enfranked your letter to mamma. My stay in town is so uncertain (not later than next week) that your packets for the north may not reach me; and as I know not exactly where I am going — however, *Newstead* is my most probable destination, and if you send your despatches before Tuesday, I can forward them to our new ally. But, after that day, you had better not trust to their arrival in time.

"Lord Kinnaird has been exiled from Paris, *on dit*, for saying the Bourbons were old women. The Bourbons might have been content, I think, with returning the compliment.

"I told you all about Jacky and Larry yesterday; — they are to be separated, — at least, so says the grand M., and I know no more of the matter. Jeffrey has done me more than 'justice;' but as to tragedy — um! — I have no time for fiction at present. A man cannot paint a storm with the vessel under bare poles on a lee-shore. When I get to land, I will try what is to be done, and, if I founder, there be plenty of mine elders and betters to console Melpomene.

"When at Newstead, you must come over, if only for a day — should Mrs. M. be *exigeante* of your presence. The place is worth seeing,

[1] [A critique on Lord Thurlow's poems had recently appeared in the Edinburgh Review.]

[2] His servant had brought him up a large jar of ink, into which, not supposing it to be full, he had thrust his pen down to the very bottom. Enraged, on finding it come out all smeared with ink, he flung the bottle out of the window into the garden, where it lighted, as here described, upon one of eight leaden Muses, that had been imported, some time before, from Holland, — the ninth having been, by some accident, left behind.

[3] [Mr. Wordsworth published, in 1814, his "Excursion; being part of the Recluse, a Poem."]

as a ruin, and I can assure you there *was* some fun there, even in my time; but that is past. The ghosts [1], however, and the gothics, and the waters, and the desolation, make it very lively still.

"Ever, dear Tom, yours, &c."

LETTER 197. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, September 2. 1814.

"I am obliged by what you have sent, but would rather not see any thing of the kind [2]; we have had enough already of these things, good and bad, and next month you need not trouble yourself to collect even the *higher* generation — on my account. It gives me much pleasure to hear of Mr. Hobhouse's and Mr. Merivale's good entreatment by the journals you mention.

"I still think Mr. Hogg and yourself might make out an alliance. *Dodsley*'s was, I believe, the last decent thing of the kind, and *his* had great success in its day, and lasted several years; but then he had the double advantage of editing and publishing. The Spleen, and several of *Gray*'s odes, much of *Shenstone*, and many others of good repute, made their first appearance in his collection. Now, with the support of Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, &c., I see little reason why you should not do as well; and, if once fairly established, you would have assistance from the youngsters, I dare say. Stratford Canning (whose 'Buonaparte' is excellent), and many others, and Moore, and Hobhouse, and I, would try a fall now and then (if permitted), and you might coax Campbell, too, into it. By the by, *he* has an unpublished (though printed) poem on a scene in Germany, (Bavaria, I think,) which I saw last year, that is perfectly magnificent, and equal to himself. I wonder he don't publish it.

"Oh! — do you recollect Sharp, the engraver's, mad letter about not engraving Phillips's picture of Lord *Foley* (as he blundered it)? well, I have traced it, I think. It seems, by the papers, a preacher of Johanna Southcote's is named *Foley;* and I can no way account for the said Sharp's confusion of words and ideas, but by that of his head's running on Johanna and her apostles. It was a mercy he did not say Lord *Tozer*. You know, of course, that Sharp is a believer in this new (old) virgin of spiritual impregnation. [3]

"I long to know what she will produce [4]; her being with child at sixty-five is indeed a miracle, but her getting any one to beget it, a greater.

"If you were not going to Paris or Scotland, I could send you some game: if you remain, let me know.

"P. S. — A word or two of 'Lara,' which your enclosure brings before me. It is of no great promise separately; but, as connected with the other tales, it will do very well for the volumes you mean to publish. I would recommend this arrangement — Childe Harold, the smaller Poems, Giaour, Bride, Corsair, Lara; the last completes the series, and its very likeness renders it necessary to the others. Cawthorne writes

[1] It was, if I mistake not, during his recent visit to Newstead, that he himself actually fancied he saw the ghost of the Black Friar, which was supposed to have haunted the Abbey from the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, and which he thus describes, from the recollection perhaps of his own fantasy, in Don Juan: —

"It was no mouse, but, lo! a monk, array'd
In cowl and beads and dusky garb, appear'd,
Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in shade,
With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard:
His garments only a slight murmur made:
He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
But slowly; and as he pass'd Juan by,
Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright eye."

It is said, that the Newstead ghost appeared, also, to Lord Byron's cousin, Miss Fanny Parkins, and that she made a sketch of him from memory.

[2] The reviews and magazines of the month.

[3] [William Sharp was an engraver of great eminence. He was a strenuous disciple of the notorious Richard Brothers, and actually engraved two plates of the soi-disant prophet, lest one should be insufficient to produce the requisite number of impressions which would be called for on the arrival of the predicted Milenuium. He afterwards attached himself to the school of Johanna Southcote, of whose pretensions he was a stanch supporter to the last. On the death of the lunatic in 1814, Mr. Sharp publicly asserted his conviction, that "she was only gone to heaven for a season, to legitimate the embryo child." He died in 1825.]

[4] The following characteristic note, in reference to this passage, appears, in Mr. Gifford's hand-writing, on the copy of the above letter: — "It is a pity that Lord B. was ignorant of Jonson. The old poet has a Satire on the Court Pucelle that would have supplied him with some pleasantry on Johanna's pregnancy."

["Shall I advise thee, Pucelle? steal away
From court, while yet thy fame hath some small day;
The wits will leave you if they once perceive
You cling to lords; and lords, if them you leave
For sermoneers: of which now one, now other,
They say you weekly invite with fits o' the mother,
And practise for a miracle: take heed,
This age will lend no faith to Darrel's deed;
Or if it would, the court is the worst place,
Both for the mothers, and the babes of grace,
For there the wicked in the chair of scorn
Will call't a bastard, when a prophet's born.

"The last couplet has a singular bearing on the juggle of Johanna Southcote." — *Gifford's Jonson*, vol. viii. p. 438.]

that they are publishing *English Bards* in *Ireland:* pray enquire into this; because *it must* be stopped."

LETTER 198. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Newstead Abbey, September 7. 1814.

"I should think Mr. Hogg, for his own sake as well as yours, would be 'critical' as Iago himself, in his editorial capacity; and that such a publication would answer his purpose and yours too, with tolerable management. You should, however, have a good number to start with — I mean *good* in quality; in these days, there can be little fear of not coming up to the mark in quantity. There must be many 'fine things' in Wordsworth; but I should think it difficult to make *six* quartos (the amount of the whole) all fine, particularly the pedler's portion of the poem; but there can be no doubt of his powers to do almost any thing.

"I *am* 'very idle.' I have read the few books I had with me, and been forced to fish, for lack of other argument. I have caught a great many perch and some carp, which is a comfort, as one would not lose one's labour willingly.

"Pray, who corrects the press of your volumes? I hope 'The Corsair' is printed from the copy I corrected, with the additional lines in the first canto, and some *notes* from Sismondi and Lavater, which I gave you to add thereto. The arrangement is very well.

"My cursed people have not sent my papers since Sunday, and I have lost Johanna's divorce from Jupiter. Who hath gotten her with prophet? Is it Sharp, and how? * * * I should like to buy one of her seals: if salvation can be had at half-a-guinea a head, the landlord of the Crown and Anchor should be ashamed of himself for charging double for tickets to a mere terrestrial banquet. I am afraid, seriously, that these matters will lend a sad handle to your profane scoffers, and give a loose to much damnable laughter.

"I have not seen Hunt's Sonnets nor Descent of Liberty: he has chosen a pretty place wherein to compose the last. Let me hear from you before you embark.

"Ever, &c."

["P. S. — Mrs. Leigh and the children are very well. I have just read to her a sentence from your epistle, and the remark was, 'How well he writes!' So you see you may set up as author in person, whenever you please."]

LETTER 199. TO MR. MOORE.

"Newstead Abbey, September 15. 1814.

"This is the fourth letter I have begun to you within the month. Whether I shall finish or not, or burn it like the rest, I know not. When we meet, I will explain *why* I have not written — *why* I have not asked you here, as I wished — with a great many other *whys* and wherefores, which will keep cold. In short, you must excuse all my seeming omissions and commissions, and grant me more *re*mission than St. Athanasius will to yourself, if you lop off a single shred of mystery from his pious puzzle. It is my creed (and it may be St. Athanasius's too) that your article on Thurlow will get somebody killed, and *that*, on the *Saints*, get him d—d afterwards, which will be quite enow for one number. Oons, Tom! you must not meddle just now with the incomprehensible; for if Johanna Southcote turns out to be * * *

"Now for a little egotism. My affairs stand thus. To-morrow I shall know whether a circumstance of importance enough to change many of my plans will occur or not. If it does not, I am off for Italy next month, and London, in the mean time, next week. I have got back Newstead and twenty-five thousand pounds (out of twenty-eight paid already), — as a 'sacrifice,' the late purchaser calls it, and he may choose his own name. I have paid some of my debts, and contracted others; but I have a few thousand pounds, which I can't spend after my own heart in this climate, and so, I shall go back to the south. Hobhouse, I think and hope, will go with me; but, whether he will or not, I shall. I want to see Venice, and the Alps, and Parmesan cheeses, and look at the coast of Greece, or rather Epirus, from Italy, as I once did — or fancied I did — that of Italy, when off Corfu. All this, however, depends upon an event, which may, or may not, happen. Whether it will, I shall know probably to-morrow; and, if it does, I can't well go abroad at present.

"Pray pardon this parenthetical scrawl. You shall hear from me again soon; — I don't call this an answer.

"Ever most affectionately, &c."

The "circumstance of importance," to which he alludes in this letter, was his second proposal for Miss Milbanke, of which he was now waiting the result. His own account, in his Memoranda, of the circumstances that led to this step is, in substance, as far as I can trust my recollection, as follows. A person, who had for some time

stood high in his affection and confidence, observing how cheerless and unsettled was the state both of his mind and prospects, advised him strenuously to marry; and, after much discussion, he consented. The next point for consideration was — who was to be the object of his choice; and while his friend mentioned one lady, he himself named Miss Milbanke. To this, however, his adviser strongly objected, — remarking to him, that Miss Milbanke had at present no fortune, and that his embarrassed affairs would not allow him to marry without one; that she was, moreover, a learned lady, which would not at all suit him. In consequence of these representations, he agreed that his friend should write a proposal for him to the other lady named, which was accordingly done; — and an answer, containing a refusal, arrived as they were, one morning, sitting together. "You see," said Lord Byron, "that, after all, Miss Milbanke is to be the person; — I will write to her." He accordingly wrote on the moment, and, as soon as he had finished, his friend, remonstrating still strongly against his choice, took up the letter, — but, on reading it over, observed, "Well, really, this is a very pretty letter; — it is a pity it should not go. I never read a prettier one." — "Then it *shall* go," said Lord Byron; and in so saying, sealed and sent off, on the instant, this fiat of his fate. [1]

LETTER 200. TO MR. MOORE.

"Nd., September 15. 1814.

"I have written to you one letter to-night, but must send you this much more, as I have not franked my number, to say that I rejoice in my god-daughter, and will send her a coral and bells, which I hope she will accept, the moment I get back to London.

"My head is at this moment in a state of confusion, from various causes, which I can neither describe nor explain — but let that pass. My employments have been very rural — fishing, shooting, bathing, and boating. Books I have but few here, and those I have read ten times over, till sick of them. So, I have taken to breaking soda-water bottles with my pistols, and jumping into the water, and rowing over it, and firing at the fowls of the air. But why should I 'monster my nothings' to you, who are well employed, and happily too, I should hope? For my part, I am happy, too, in my way — but, as usual, have contrived to get into three or four perplexities, which I do not see my way through. But a few days, perhaps a day, will determine one of them.

"You do not say a word to me of your poem. I wish I could see or hear it. I neither could, nor would, do it or its author any harm. I believe I told you of Larry and Jacquy. A friend of mine was reading — at least a friend of his was reading — said Larry and Jacquy in a Brighton coach. A passenger took up the book and queried as to the author. The proprietor said 'there were *two*' — to which the answer of the unknown was, 'Ay, ay, — a joint concern, I suppose, *summot* like Sternhold and Hopkins.'

"Is not this excellent? I would not have missed the 'vile comparison' to have 'scaped being one of the 'Arcades ambo et cantare pares.' Good night. Again yours."

CHAPTER XXIII.

MISS MILBANKE — ACCEPTATION. — LETTERS TO MOORE AND DRURY. — WEDDING PREPARATIONS. — VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE. — STATE OF LORD BYRON'S MIND AND FEELINGS. — EVENINGS AT DOUGLAS KINNAIRD'S. — PECUNIARY EMBARRASSMENTS. — SEAHAM. — MARRIAGE. — LETTERS TO MOORE AND MURRAY. — HONEY-MOON. — HEBREW MELODIES. — DEATH OF THE DUKE OF DORSET. — LETTER TO COLERIDGE.

LETTER 201. TO MR. MOORE.

"Newstead Abbey, Sept. 20. 1814.

"Here's to her who long
Hath waked the poet's sigh!
The girl who gave to song
What gold could never buy. — My dear Moore, I am going to be married — that is, I am accepted [2], and one usually hopes the

[1] ["This recital will amuse some and shock others: us it both amuses and shocks; and we presume that it presents a fair specimen of the thoughts and feelings of that high life into which all men must be admitted, as Byron was by birth and Moore by genius (so said his lordship), ere they can hope to become poets! Nothing in the lowest farce was ever lower; yet it may be said to have been the prologue to a tragedy which had a grievous catastrophe. It may not be always much amiss to employ a friend to buy one a shandrydan or a trotting pony; but when the transaction regards a wife, pray keep the pen in your own hand: for if you employ an amanuensis — a secretary — a clerk, not only to write your proposal of marriage to your intended, but commission him to put his finger on the object proper for your choice, you have only to look along the 'vista of your future years,' and 'tis shut up by that impressive temple, Doctors' Commons."— WILSON.]

[2] On the day of the arrival of the lady's answer, he was sitting at dinner, when his gardener came in and presented

rest will follow. My mother of the Gracchi (that *are* to be), *you* think too strait-laced for me, although the paragon of only children, and invested with 'golden opinions of all sorts of men,' and full of 'most blest conditions' as Desdemona herself. Miss Milbanke is the lady, and I have her father's invitation to proceed there in my elect capacity, — which, however, I cannot do till I have settled some business in London, and got a blue coat.

"She is said to be an heiress, but of that I really know nothing certainly, and shall not enquire. But I do know, that she has talents and excellent qualities; and you will not deny her judgment, after having refused six suitors and taken me.

"Now, if you have any thing to say against this, pray do; my mind's made up, positively fixed, determined, and therefore I will listen to reason, because now it can do no harm. Things may occur to break it off, but I will hope not. In the mean time, I tell you (a *secret*, by the by, — at least till I know she wishes it to be public) that I have proposed and am accepted. You need not be in a hurry to wish me joy, for one mayn't be married for months. I am going to town to-morrow; but expect to be here, on my way there, within a fortnight.

"If this had not happened, I should have gone to Italy. In my way down, perhaps, you will meet me at Nottingham, and come over with me here. I need not say that nothing will give me greater pleasure. I must, of course, reform thoroughly; and, seriously, if I can contribute to her happiness, I shall secure my own. She is so good a person, that — that — in short, I wish I was a better. Ever, &c."

LETTER 202. TO THE COUNTESS OF ***.

"Albany, October 5. 1814.

"Dear Lady * *,

"Your recollection and invitation do me great honour; but I am going to be 'married, and can't come.' My intended is two hundred miles off, and the moment my business here is arranged, I must set out in a great hurry to be happy. Miss Milbanke is the good-natured person who has undertaken me, and, of course, I am very much in love, and as silly as all single gentlemen must be in that sentimental situation. I have been accepted these three weeks; but when the event will take place, I don't exactly know. It depends partly upon lawyers, who are never in a hurry. One can be sure of nothing; but, at present, there appears no other interruption to this intention, which seems as mutual as possible, and now no secret, though I did not tell first, — and all our relatives are congratulating away to right and left in the most fatiguing manner.

"You perhaps know the lady. She is niece to Lady Melbourne, and cousin to Lady Cowper and others of your acquaintance, and has no fault, except being a great deal too good for me, and that *I* must pardon, if nobody else should. It might have been *two* years ago, and, if it had, would have saved me a world of trouble. She has employed the interval in refusing about half a dozen of my particular friends, (as she did me once, by the way,) and has taken me at last, for which I am very much obliged to her. I wish it was well over, for I do hate bustle, and there is no marrying without some; — and then, I must not marry in a black coat, they tell me, and I can't bear a blue one.

"Pray forgive me for scribbling all this nonsense. You know I must be serious all the rest of my life, and this is a parting piece of buffoonery, which I write with tears in my eyes, expecting to be agitated. Believe me most seriously and sincerely your obliged servant, "BYRON.

"P. S. — My best rems. to Lord * * on his return."

LETTER 203. TO MR. MOORE.

"October 7. 1814.

"Notwithstanding the contradictory paragraph in the Morning Chronicle, which must have been sent by * *, or perhaps — I know not why I should suspect Claughton of such a thing, and yet I partly do, because it might interrupt his renewal of purchase, if so disposed; in short, it matters not, but we are all in the road to matrimony — lawyers settling, relations congratulating, my intended as kind as heart could wish, and every one, whose opinion I value, very glad of it. All her relatives, and all mine too, seem equally pleased.

"Perry was very sorry, and has *re*-contradicted, as you will perceive by this day's paper. It was, to be sure, a devil of an insertion, since the first paragraph came from Sir Ralph's own County Journal, and this in

him with his mother's wedding ring, which she had lost many years before, and which the gardener had just found in digging up the mould under her window. Almost at the same moment, the letter from Miss Milbanke arrived; and Lord Byron exclaimed, "If it contains a consent, I will be married with this very ring." It *did* contain a very flattering acceptance of his proposal, and a duplicate of the letter had been sent to London, in case this should have missed him. — *Memoranda.*

the teeth of it would appear to him and his as *my* denial. But I have written to do away that, enclosing Perry's letter, which was very polite and kind.

"Nobody hates bustle so much as I do; but there seems a fatality over every scene of my drama, always a row of some sort or other. No matter — Fortune is my best friend; and as I acknowledge my obligations to her, I hope she will treat me better than she treated the Athenian, who took some merit to *himself* on some occasion, but (after that) took no more towns. In fact, *she*, that exquisite goddess, has hitherto carried me through every thing, and will, I hope, now; since I own it will be all *her* doing.

"Well, now, for thee. Your article on * * is perfection itself. You must not leave off reviewing. By Jove, I believe you can do any thing. There is wit, and taste, and learning, and good humour (though not a whit less severe for that), in every line of that critique.

"Next to *your* being an E. Reviewer, *my* being of the same kidney, and Jeffrey's being such a friend to both, are amongst the events which I conceive were not calculated upon in Mr. — what's his name?'s — 'Essay on Probabilities.'[1]

"But, Tom, I say — Oons! Scott menaces the 'Lord of the Isles.'[2] Do you mean to compete? or lay by, till this wave has broke upon the *shelves?* (of booksellers, not rocks — a *broken* metaphor, by the way). You *ought* to be afraid of nobody; but your modesty is really as provoking and unnecessary as a * *'s. I am very merry, and have just been writing some elegiac stanzas on the death of Sir P. Parker.[3] He was my first cousin, but never met since boyhood. Our relations desired me, and I have scribbled and given it to Perry, who will chronicle it to-morrow. I am as sorry for him as one could be for one I never saw since I was a child; but should not have wept melodiously, except 'at the request of friends.'

"I hope to get out of town and be married, but I shall take Newstead in my way; and you must meet me at Nottingham and accompany me to mine Abbey. I will tell you the day when I know it.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. — By the way my wife elect is perfection, and I hear of nothing but her merits and her wonders, and that she is 'very pretty.' Her expectations, I am told, are great; but *what*, I have not asked. I have not seen her these ten months."

LETTER 204. TO MR. MOORE.

"October 14. 1814.

"An' there were any thing in marriage that would make a difference between my friends and me, particularly in your case, I would 'none on't.' My agent sets off for Durham next week, and I shall follow him, taking Newstead and you in my way. I certainly did not address Miss Milbanke with these views, but it is likely she may prove a considerable *parti*. All her father can give, or leave her, he will; and from her childless uncle, Lord Wentworth, whose barony, it is supposed, will devolve on Ly. Milbanke (*his* sister), she has expectations. But these will depend upon his own disposition, which seems very partial towards her. She is an only child, and Sir R.'s estates, though dipped by electioneering, are considerable. Part of them are settled on her; but whether *that* will be *dowered* now, I do not know, — though, from what has been intimated to me, it probably will. The lawyers are to settle this among them, and I am getting my property into matrimonial array, and myself ready for the journey to Seaham, which I must make in a week or ten days.

"I certainly did not dream that she was attached to me, which it seems she has been for some time. I also thought her of a very cold disposition, in which I was also mistaken — it is a long story, and I won't trouble you with it. As to her virtues, &c. &c. you will hear enough of them (for she is a kind of *pattern* in the north), without my running into a display on the subject. It is well that *one* of us is of such fame, since there is sad deficit in the *morale* of that article upon my part, — all owing to my 'bitch of a star,' as Captain Tranchemont says of his planet.

"Don't think you have not said enough of me in your article on T * *; what more could or need be said?[4]

"Your long-delayed and expected work — I suppose you will take fright at 'The Lord of the Isles' and Scott now. You

[1] [A review of La Place's "Essai Philosophique sur les Probabilités" had just appeared in the Edinburgh.]

[2] [Sir Walter Scott's "Lord of the Isles" was advertised in the autumn of this year, and published in the January following.]

[3] [See *Works*, p. 560. This gallant officer fell, in August 1814, at the early age of twenty-eight, whilst commanding, on shore, a party belonging to his ship, the Menelaus, and animating them, in storming the American camp near Baltimore.]

[4] ["We could name but one noble bard, among either the living or the dead, whose laurels are sufficiently abundant to keep the coronet totally out of sight." — See *Edin. Rev.* vol. xxiii. p. 411.]

must do as you like, — I have said my say. You ought to fear comparison with none, and any one would stare, who heard you were so tremulous, — though, after all, I believe it is the surest sign of talent. Good morning. I hope we shall meet soon, but I will write again, and perhaps you will meet me at Nottingham. Pray say so.

"P. S. — If this union is productive, you shall name the first fruits."

LETTER 205. TO MR. HENRY DRURY.

"October 18. 1814.

"My dear Drury,

"Many thanks for your hitherto unacknowledged 'Anecdotes.' Now for one of mine — I am going to be married, and have been engaged this month. It is a long story, and, therefore, I won't tell it, — an old and (though I did not know it till lately) a *mutual* attachment. The very sad life I have led since I was your pupil must partly account for the offs and *ons* in this now to be arranged business. We are only waiting for the lawyers and settlements, &c.; and next week, or the week after, I shall go down to Seaham in the new character of a regular suitor for a wife of mine own.

"I hope Hodgson is in a fair way on the same voyage — I saw him and his idol at Hastings. I wish he would be married at the same time, — I should like to make a party, — like people electrified in a row, by (or rather through) the same chain, holding one another's hands, and all feeling the shock at once. I have not yet apprised him of this. He makes such a serious matter of all these things, and is so 'melancholy and gentlemanlike,' that it is quite overcoming to us choice spirits.

"They say one should'nt be married in a black coat. I won't have a blue one, — that's flat. I hate it.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 206. TO MR. COWELL.

"October 22. 1814.

"My dear Cowell,

"Many and sincere thanks for your kind letter — the bet, or rather forfeit, was one hundred to Hawke, and fifty to Hay (nothing to Kelly), for a guinea received from each of the two former.[1] I shall feel much obliged by your setting me right if I am incorrect in this statement in any way, and have reasons for wishing you to recollect as much as possible of what passed, and state it to Hodgson. My reason is this: some time ago Mr. * * * required a bet of me which I never made, and of course refused to pay, and have heard no more of it; to prevent similar mistakes is my object in wishing you to remember well what passed, and to put Hodgson in possession of your memory on the subject.

"I hope to see you soon in my way through Cambridge. Remember me to H., and believe me ever and truly, &c."

Soon after the date of this letter, Lord Byron had to pay a visit to Cambridge for the purpose of voting for Mr. Clarke, who had been started by Trinity College as one of the candidates for Sir Busick Harwood's Professorship. On this occasion, a circumstance occurred which could not but be gratifying to him. As he was delivering in his vote to the Vice-Chancellor, in the Senate House, the undergraduates in the gallery ventured to testify their admiration of him by a general murmur of applause and stamping of the feet. For this breach of order, the gallery was immediately cleared by order of the Vice-Chancellor.

At the beginning of the month of December, being called up to town by business, I had opportunities, from being a good deal in my noble friend's society, of observing the state of his mind and feelings, under the prospect of the important change he was now about to undergo; and it was with pain I found that those sanguine hopes[2] with which I had sometimes looked forward to the happy influence of marriage, in winning him over to the brighter and better side of life, were, by a view of all the circumstances of his present destiny, considerably diminished; while, at the same time, not a few doubts and misgivings, which had never before so strongly occurred to me, with regard to his own fitness, under any circumstances, for the matrimonial tie, filled me altogether with a degree of foreboding anxiety as to his fate, which the unfortunate events that followed but too fully justified.

The truth is, I fear, that rarely, if ever, have men of the higher order of genius shown

[1] He had agreed to forfeit these sums to the persons mentioned, should he ever marry.

[2] I had frequently, both in earnest and in jest, expressed these hopes to him; and, in one of my letters, after touching upon some matters relative to my own little domestic circle, I added, "This will all be unintelligible to you; though I sometimes cannot help thinking it within the range of possibility, that even *you*, volcano as you are, may, one day, cool down into something of the same *habitable* state. Indeed, when one thinks of lava having been converted into buttons for Isaac Hawkins Browne, there is no saying what such fiery things may be brought to at last.

themselves fitted for the calm affections and comforts that form the cement of domestic life. "One misfortune (says Pope) of extraordinary geniuses is, that their very friends are more apt to admire than love them." To this remark there have, no doubt, been exceptions, — and I should pronounce Lord Byron, from my own experience, to be one of them, — but it would not be difficult, perhaps, to show, from the very nature and pursuits of genius, that such must generally be the lot of all pre-eminently gifted with it; and that the same qualities which enable them to command admiration are also those that too often incapacitate them from conciliating love.

The very habits, indeed, of abstraction and self-study to which the occupations of men of genius lead, are, in themselves, necessarily of an unsocial and detaching tendency, and require a large portion of indulgence from others not to be set down as unamiable. One of the chief sources, too, of sympathy and society between ordinary mortals being their dependence on each other's intellectual resources, the operation of this social principle must naturally be weakest in those whose own mental stores are most abundant and self-sufficing, and who, rich in such materials for thinking within themselves, are rendered so far independent of any aid from others. It was this solitary luxury (which Plato called "banqueting his own thoughts") that led Pope, as well as Lord Byron, to prefer the silence and seclusion of his library to the most agreeable conversation. — And not only too, is the necessity of commerce with other minds less felt by such persons, but, from that fastidiousness which the opulence of their own resources generates, the society of those less gifted than themselves becomes often a restraint and burden, to which not all the charms of friendship, or even love, can reconcile them. "Nothing is so tiresome (says the poet of Vaucluse, in assigning a reason for not living with some of his dearest friends) as to converse with persons who have not the same information as one's self."

But it is the cultivation and exercise of the imaginative faculty that, more than any thing, tends to wean the man of genius from actual life, and, by substituting the sensibilities of the imagination for those of the heart, to render, at last, the medium through which he feels no less unreal than that through which he thinks. Those images of ideal good and beauty that surround him in his musings soon accustom him to consider all that is beneath this high standard unworthy of his care; till, at length, the heart becoming chilled as the fancy warms, it too often happens that, in proportion as he has refined and elevated his theory of all the social affections, he has unfitted himself for the practice of them.[1] Hence so frequently it arises that, in persons of this temperament, we see some bright but artificial idol of the brain usurp the place of all real and natural objects of tenderness. The poet Dante, a wanderer away from wife and children, passed the whole of a restless and detached life in nursing his immortal dream of Beatrice; while Petrarch, who would not suffer his only daughter to reside beneath his roof, expended thirty-two years of poetry and passion on an idealised love.

It is, indeed, in the very nature and essence of genius to be for ever occupied intensely with self, as the great centre and source of its strength. Like the sister Rachel, in Dante, sitting all day before her mirror,

> "mai non si smaga
> Del suo ammiraglio, e siede tutto giorno."[2]

To this power of self-concentration, by which alone all the other powers of genius are made available, there is, of course, no such disturbing and fatal enemy as those sympathies and affections that draw the mind out actively towards others[3]; and, accordingly, it will be found that, among those who have felt within themselves a call to immortality, the greater number have, by a sort of instinct, kept aloof from such ties, and, instead of the softer duties and rewards of being amiable, reserved themselves for the high, hazardous chances of being great. In looking back through the lives of the most illustrious poets, — the class of intellect in which the characteristic features of genius are, perhaps, most strongly marked, — we shall find that, with scarcely one exception, from Homer down to Lord Byron,

[1] Of the lamentable contrast between sentiments and conduct, which this transfer of the seat of sensibility from the heart to the fancy produces, the annals of literary men afford unluckily too many examples. Alfieri, though he could write a sonnet full of tenderness to his mother, never saw her (says Mr. W. Rose) but once after their early separation, though he frequently passed within a few miles of her residence. The poet Young, with all his parade of domestic sorrows, was, it appears, a neglectful husband and harsh father; and Sterne (to use the words employed by Lord Byron) preferred "whining over a dead ass to relieving a living mother."

[2] [——— "She
Before her glass abides the live-long day,
Her radiant eyes beholding."]

[3] It is the opinion of Diderot, in his Treatise on Acting, that not only in the art of which he treats, but in all those which are called imitative, the possession of real sensibility is a bar to eminence;—sensibility being, according to his view, "le caractère de la bonté de l'ame et de la médiocrité du génie."

they have been, in their several degrees, restless and solitary spirits, with minds wrapped up, like silk-worms, in their own tasks, either strangers, or rebels to domestic ties, and bearing about with them a deposit for posterity in their souls, to the jealous watching and enriching of which almost all other thoughts and considerations have been sacrificed.

"To follow poetry as one ought (says the authority [1] I have already quoted), one must forget father and mother and cleave to it alone." In these few words is pointed out the sole path that leads genius to greatness. On such terms alone are the high places of fame to be won;—nothing less than the sacrifice of the entire man can achieve them. However delightful, therefore, may be the spectacle of a man of genius tamed and domesticated in society, taking docilely upon him the yoke of the social ties, and enlightening without disturbing the sphere in which he moves, we must nevertheless, in the midst of our admiration, bear in mind that it is not thus smoothly or amiably immortality has been ever struggled for, or won. The poet thus circumstanced may be popular, may be loved; for the happiness of himself and those linked with him he is in the right road,—but not for greatness. The marks by which Fame has always separated her great martyrs from the rest of mankind are not upon him, and the crown cannot be his. He may dazzle, may captivate the circle, and even the times in which he lives, but he is not for hereafter.

To the general description here given of that high class of human intelligences to which he belonged, the character of Lord Byron was, in many respects, a signal exception. Born with strong affections and ardent passions, the world had, from first to last, too firm a hold on his sympathies to let imagination altogether usurp the place of reality, either in his feelings, or in the objects of them. His life, indeed, was one continued struggle between that instinct of genius, which was for ever drawing him back into the lonely laboratory of Self, and those impulses of passion, ambition, and vanity, which again hurried him off into the crowd, and entangled him in its interests; and though it may be granted that he would have been more purely and abstractedly the *poet*, had he been less thoroughly, in all his pursuits and propensities, the *man*, yet from this very mixture and alloy has it arisen that his pages bear so deeply the stamp of real life, and that in the works of no poet, with the exception of Shakspeare, can every various mood of the mind—whether solemn or gay, whether inclined to the ludicrous or the sublime, whether seeking to divert itself with the follies of society or panting after the grandeur of solitary nature—find so readily a strain of sentiment in accordance with its every passing tone.

But while the naturally warm cast of his affections and temperament gave thus a substance and truth to his social feelings, which those of too many of his fellow votaries of Genius have wanted, it was not to be expected that an imagination of such range and power should have been so early developed and unrestrainedly indulged without producing, at last, some of those effects upon the heart which have invariably been found attendant on such a predominance of this faculty. It must have been observed, indeed, that the period when his natural affections flourished most healthily was before he had yet arrived at the full consciousness of his genius, — before Imagination had yet accustomed him to those glowing pictures, after gazing upon which all else appeared cold and colourless. From the moment of this initiation into the wonders of his own mind, a distaste for the realities of life began to grow upon him. Not even that intense craving after affection, which nature had implanted in him, could keep his ardour still alive in a pursuit whose results fell so short of his "imaginings;" and though, from time to time, the combined warmth of his fancy and temperament was able to call up a feeling which to his eyes wore the semblance of love, it may be questioned whether his heart had ever much share in such passions, or whether, after his first launch into the boundless sea of imagination, he could ever have been brought back and fixed by any lasting attachment. Actual objects there were, in but too great number, who, as long as the illusion continued, kindled up his thoughts and were the themes of his song. But they were, after all, little more than mere dreams of the hour;—the qualities with which he invested them were almost all ideal, nor could have stood the test of a month's or even week's cohabitation. It was but the reflection of his own bright conceptions that he saw in each new object; and while persuading himself that they furnished the models of his heroines, he was, on the contrary, but fancying that he beheld his heroines in them.

There needs no stronger proof of the predominance of imagination in these attachments than his own serious avowal, in the

[1] Pope.

Journal already given, that often, when in the company of the woman he most loved, he found himself secretly wishing for the solitude of his own study. It was *there*, indeed, — in the silence and abstraction of that study, — that the chief scene of his mistress's empire and glory lay. It was there that, unchecked by reality, and without any fear of the disenchantments of truth, he could view her through the medium of his own fervid fancy, enamour himself of an idol of his own creating, and, out of a brief delirium of a few days or weeks, send forth a dream of beauty and passion through all ages.

While such appears to have been the imaginative character of his loves, (of all, except the one that lived unquenched through all,) his friendships, though, of course, far less subject to the influence of fancy, could not fail to exhibit also some features characteristic of the peculiar mind in which they sprung. It was a usual saying of his own, and will be found repeated in some of his letters, that he had "no genius for friendship," and that whatever capacity he might once have possessed for that sentiment had vanished with his youth. If in saying thus he shaped his notions of friendship according to the romantic standard of his boyhood, the fact must be admitted: but as far as the assertion was meant to imply that he had become incapable of a warm, manly, and lasting friendship, such a charge against himself was unjust, and I am not the only living testimony of its injustice.

To a certain degree, however, even in his friendships, the effects of a too vivid imagination, in disqualifying the mind for the cold contact of reality, were visible. We are told that Petrarch (who, in this respect, as in most others, may be regarded as a genuine representative of the poetic character) abstained purposely from a too frequent intercourse with his nearest friends, lest, from the sensitiveness he was so aware of in himself, there should occur any thing that might chill his regard for them [1]; and though Lord Byron was of a nature too full of social and kindly impulses ever to think of such a precaution, it is a fact confirmatory, at least, of the principle on which his brother poet, Petrarch, acted, that the friends, whether of his youth or manhood, of whom he had seen least, through life, were those of whom he always thought and spoke with the most warmth and fondness. Being brought less often to the touchstone of familiar intercourse, they stood naturally a better chance of being adopted as the favourites of his imagination, and of sharing, in consequence, a portion of that bright colouring reserved for all that gave it interest and pleasure. Next to the dead, therefore, whose hold upon his fancy had been placed beyond all risk of severance, those friends whom he but saw occasionally, and by such favourable glimpses as only renewed the first kindly impression they had made, were the surest to live unchangingly, and without shadow, in his memory.

To this same cause, there is little doubt, his love for his sister owed much of its devotedness and fervour. In a mind sensitive and versatile as his, long habits of family intercourse might have estranged, or at least dulled, his natural affection for her; — but their separation, during youth, left this feeling fresh and untried. [2] His very inexperience in such ties made the smile of a sister no less a novelty than a charm to him; and before the first gloss of this newly awakened sentiment had time to wear off, they were again separated, and for ever.

If the portrait which I have here attempted of the general character of those gifted with high genius be allowed to bear, in any of its features, a resemblance to the originals, it can no longer, I think, be matter of question whether a class so set apart from the track of ordinary life, so removed, by their very elevation, out of the influences of our common atmosphere, are at all likely to furnish tractable subjects for that most trying of all social experiments, matrimony. In reviewing the great names of philosophy and science, we shall find that all who have most distinguished themselves in those walks have, at least, virtually admitted their own unfitness for the marriage tie by remaining in celibacy; — Newton, Gassendi, Galileo, Descartes, Bayle, Locke, Leibnitz, Boyle, Hume, and a long list of other illustrious sages, having all led single lives. [3]

[1] See Foscolo's Essay on Petrarch. On the same principle, Orrery says, in speaking of Swift, "I am persuaded that his distance from his English friends proved a strong incitement to their mutual affection."

[2] That he was himself fully aware of this appears from a passage in one of his letters already given: — "My sister is in town, which is a great comfort; for, never having been much together, we are naturally more attached to each other."

[3] Wife and children, Bacon tells us, in one of his Essays, are "impediments to great enterprises:" and adds, "Certainly, the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men." See, with reference to this subject, Mr. D'Israeli's work on "The Literary Character," chapter xviii.: "Matrimony is said not to be well suited to the domestic life of genius."

The poetic race, it is true, from the greater susceptibility of their imaginations, have more frequently fallen into the ever ready snare. But the fate of the poets in matrimony has but justified the caution of the philosophers. While the latter have given warning to genius by keeping free of the yoke, the others have still more effectually done so by their misery under it; — the annals of this sensitive race having, at all times, abounded with proofs, that genius ranks but low among the elements of social happiness, — that, in general, the brighter the gift, the more disturbing its influence, and that in married life particularly, its effects have been too often like that of the "Wormwood Star," whose light filled the waters on which it fell with bitterness.

Besides the causes already enumerated as leading naturally to such a result, from the peculiarities by which, in most instances, these great labourers in the field of thought are characterised, there is also much, no doubt, to be attributed to an unluckiness in the choice of helpmates, — dictated, as that choice frequently must be, by an imagination accustomed to deceive itself. But from whatever causes it may have arisen, the coincidence is no less striking than saddening, that, on the list of married poets who have been unhappy in their homes, there should already be found four such illustrious names as Dante, Milton [1], Shakspeare [2], and Dryden; and that we should now have to add, as a partner in their destiny, a name worthy of being placed beside the greatest of them — Lord Byron.

I have already mentioned my having been called up to town in the December of this year. The opportunities I had of seeing Lord Byron during my stay were frequent; and, among them, not the least memorable or agreeable were those evenings we passed together at the house of his banker, Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, where music — followed by its accustomed sequel of supper, brandy and water, and not a little laughter, — kept us together, usually, till rather a late hour. Besides those songs of mine which he has himself somewhere recorded as his favourites, there was also one to a Portuguese air, "The song of war shall echo through our mountains," which seemed especially to please him; — the national character of the music, and the recurrence of the words "sunny mountains," bringing back freshly to his memory the impressions of all he had seen in Portugal. I have, indeed, known few persons more alive to the charms of simple music; and not unfrequently have seen the tears in his eyes while listening to the Irish Melodies. Among those that thus affected him was one beginning, "When first I met thee warm and young," the words of which, besides the obvious feeling which they express, were intended also to admit of a political application. He, however, discarded the latter sense wholly from his mind, and gave himself up to the more natural sentiment of the song with evident emotion.

On one or two of these evenings, his favourite actor, Mr. Kean, was of the party; and on another occasion, we had at dinner his early instructor in pugilism, Mr. Jackson, in conversing with whom, all his boyish tastes seemed to revive; — and it was not a little amusing to observe how perfectly familiar with the annals of "The Ring [3]," and with all the most recondite phraseology of "the Fancy," was the sublime poet of Childe Harold.

The following note is the only one, of those I received from him at this time, worth transcribing: —

[1] Milton's first wife, it is well known, ran away from him within a month after their marriage, disgusted, says Phillips, "with his spare diet and hard study;" and it is difficult to conceive a more melancholy picture of domestic life than is disclosed in his nuncupative will, one of the witnesses to which deposes to having heard the great poet himself complain, that his children "were careless of him, being blind, and made nothing of deserting him."

[2] By whatever austerity of temper or habits the poets Dante and Milton may have drawn upon themselves such a fate, it might be expected that, at least, the "gentle Shakspeare" would have stood exempt from the common calamity of his brethren. But, among the very few facts of his life that have been transmitted to us, there is none more clearly proved than the unhappiness of his marriage. The dates of the birth of his children, compared with that of his removal from Stratford, — the total omission of his wife's name in the first draught of his will, and the bitter sarcasm of the bequest by which he remembers her afterwards, — all prove beyond a doubt both his separation from the lady early in life, and his unfriendly feeling towards her at the close of it.

In endeavouring to argue against the conclusion naturally to be deduced from this will, Boswell, with a strange ignorance of human nature, remarks: — "If he had taken offence at any part of his wife's conduct, I cannot believe that he would have taken this petty mode of expressing it." [Shakspeare bequeathed his brown-best bed to his wife. George Steevens suggests, by way of apology, a quotation for Venice Preserved, "The very bed that on his bridal night received him to the arms of Belvidera."]

[3] In a small book which I have in my possession, containing a sort of chronological History of the Ring, I find the name of Lord Byron, more than once, recorded among the "backers."

"December 14. 1814.

"My dearest Tom,

"I will send the pattern to-morrow, and since you don't go to our friend ('of the *keeping* part of the town') this evening, I shall e'en sulk at home over a solitary potation. My self-opinion rises much by your eulogy of my social qualities. As my friend Scrope is pleased to say, I believe I am very well for a 'holiday drinker.' Where the devil are you? With Woolriche[1], I conjecture — for which you deserve another abscess. Hoping that the American war will last for many years, and that all the prizes may be registered at Bermoothes, believe me, &c.

"P. S. — I have just been composing an epistle to the Archbishop for an especial licence. Oons! it looks serious. Murray is impatient to see you, and would call, if you will give him audience. Your new coat! — I wonder you like the colour, and don't go about, like Dives, in purple."

LETTER 207. TO MR. MURRAY.

"December 31. 1814.

"A thousand thanks for Gibbon: all the additions are very great improvements.

"At last I must be *most* peremptory with you about the *print* from Phillips's picture; it is pronounced on all hands the most stupid and disagreeable possible: so do, pray, have a new engraving, and let me see it first; there really must be no more from the same plate. I don't much care, myself; but every one I honour torments me to death about it, and abuses it to a degree beyond repeating. Now, don't answer with excuses; but, for my sake, have it destroyed: I never shall have peace till it is. I write in the greatest haste.

"P. S. — I have written this most illegibly; but it is to beg you to destroy the print, and have another 'by particular desire.' It must be d—d bad, to be sure, since every body says so but the original; and he don't know what to say. But do *do* it: that is, burn the plate, and employ a new *etcher* from the other picture. This is stupid and sulky."

On his arrival in town, he had, upon inquiring into the state of his affairs, found them in so utterly embarrassed a condition as to fill him with some alarm, and even to suggest to his mind the prudence of deferring his marriage. The die was, however, cast, and he had now no alternative but to proceed. Accordingly, at the end of December, accompanied by his friend Mr. Hobhouse, he set out for Seaham, the seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, the lady's father, in the county of Durham, and on the 2d of January, 1815, was married.

"I saw him stand
Before an altar with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The self-same aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face,
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her, who was his destiny, came back,
And thrust themselves between him and the light:—
What business had they there at such a time?"[2]

This touching picture agrees so closely, in many of its circumstances, with his own prose account of the wedding in his Memoranda, that I feel justified in introducing it, historically, here. In that Memoir, he described himself as waking, on the morning of his marriage, with the most melancholy reflections, on seeing his wedding-suit spread out before him. In the same mood, he wandered about the grounds alone, till he was summoned for the ceremony, and joined, for the first time on that day, his bride and her family. He knelt down, he repeated the words after the clergyman; but a mist was before his eyes,—his thoughts were elsewhere; and he was but awakened by the congratulations of the bystanders, to find that he was — married.

[1] Dr. Woolriche, an old and valued friend of mine, to whose skill, on the occasion here alluded to, I was indebted for my life.

[2] The Dream. ["It is hard to say, whether the cynical prose of the letters, or the bitter sadness of the poetry, augured the worst for the results of this rash union. It is sufficiently obvious, that Lord Byron did not solicit Miss Milbanke's hand under the influence of any thing which could deserve the name of love; and we fear it must also be admitted, that he entered on matrimonial life, not only without any serious consideration of the solemn and sacred obligations he was taking upon him, but in a mood and temper of mind very slightly tinged with those feelings and reflections which, even where it is too late for the high and delicate romance of an unwasted heart, spring up naturally on such occasions, and afford at least the prospect of a tender watchfulness and a generous protection to the woman who, in the freshness of youth and innocence, surrenders her all to a manly bosom."— *Quart. Rev.* 1831.]

The same morning, the wedded pair left Seaham for Halnaby, another seat of Sir Ralph Milbanke, in the same county. When about to depart, Lord Byron said to the bride, "Miss Milbanke, are you ready?" — a mistake which the lady's confidential attendant pronounced to be a "bad omen."[1]

It is right to add, that I quote these slight details from memory, and am alone answerable for any inaccuracy there may be found in them.

LETTER 208. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Kirkby, January 6. 1815.

"*The* marriage took place on the 2d instant: so pray make haste and congratulate away.

"Thanks for the Edinburgh Review and the abolition of the print. Let the next be from the *other* of Phillips — I mean (*not* the Albanian, but) the original one in the exhibition; the last was from the copy. I should wish my sister and Lady Byron to decide upon the next, as they found fault with the last. *I* have no opinion of my own upon the subject.

"Mr. Kinnaird will, I dare say, have the goodness to furnish copies of the Melodies[2], if you state my wish upon the subject. You may have them, if you think them worth inserting. The volumes in their collected state must be inscribed to Mr. Hobhouse, but I have not yet mustered the expressions of my inscription; but will supply them in time.

"With many thanks for your good wishes, which have all been realised, I remain, very truly, yours, "BYRON."

LETTER 209. TO MR. MOORE.

"Halnaby, Darlington, January 10. 1815.

"I was married this day week. The parson has pronounced it — Perry has announced it — and the Morning Post, also, under the head of 'Lord Byron's Marriage' — as if it were a fabrication, or the puff-direct of a new stay-maker.

"Now for thine affairs. I have redde thee upon the Fathers[3], and it is excellent well. Positively, you must not leave off reviewing. You shine in it — you kill in it: and this article has been taken for Sydney Smith's (as I heard in town), which proves not only your proficiency in parsonology, but that you have all the airs of a veteran critic at your first onset. So, prithee, go on and prosper.

"Scott's 'Lord of the Isles' is out — 'the mail-coach copy' I have, by special licence, of Murray.

"Now is *your* time; — you will come upon them newly and freshly. It is impossible to read what you have lately done (verse or prose) without seeing that you have trained on tenfold. * * has floundered; * * has foundered. *I* have tried the rascals (*i. e.* the public) with my Harrys and Larrys, Pilgrims and Pirates. Nobody but S * * * * y [Southey] has done any thing worth a slice of bookseller's pudding, and *he* has not luck enough to be found out in doing a good thing. Now, Tom, is thy time — 'Oh, joyful day! — I would not take a knighthood for thy fortune.' Let me hear from you soon, and believe me ever, &c.

"P. S. — Lady Byron is vastly well. How are Mrs. Moore and Joe Atkinson's 'Graces?' We must present our women to one another."

LETTER 210. TO MR. MOORE.

"January 19. 1815.

"Egad! I don't think he is 'down;' and my prophecy — like most auguries, sacred and profane — is not annulled, but inverted.

"To your question about the 'dog'[4] — Umph! — my 'mother,' I won't say any thing

[1] ["That Byron should have called his bride, the moment after marriage, 'Miss Milbanke,' *was* of ill omen; for it was cold as ice, when his looks should have been like that harmless lightning, that, without any noise, softly gleams through the twilight of the summer woods; and his words a blessing and a prayer prolonged in the spirit of the nuptial benediction, but confined now in its glowing sanctity to his own virgin's ear." — WILSON.]

[2] The Hebrew Melodies which he had employed himself in writing, during his recent stay in London.

[3] [A review, by Mr. Moore, of a work entitled "Select Passages from the Writings of St. Chrysostom, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and St. Basil, translated from the Greek by Hugh Stuart Boyd." See *Edinb. Rev.* vol. xxiv. p. 58.]

[4] I had just been reading Mr. Southey's fine poem of "Roderick;" and, with reference to an incident in it, had put the following question to Lord Byron — "I should like to know from *you*, who are one of the philocynic sect, whether it is probable that any dog (out of a melodrame) could recognise a master, whom neither his own mother or mistress was able to find out. I don't care about Ulysses' dog, &c. — all I want is to know from *you* (who are renowned as 'friend of the dog, companion of the bear') whether such a thing is probable."

["The dog who lay,
Before Rusilla's feet, eyeing him long
And wistfully, had recognised at length,
Changed as he was, and in those sordid weeds,
His royal master. And he rose and lick'd
His wither'd hand, and earnestly look'd up,
With eyes whose human meaning did not need
The aid of speech; and moan'd, as if at once
To court and chide the long-withheld caress."
Southey's Poet. Works, ed. 1838.]

against — that is, about her: but how long a 'mistress' or friend may recollect paramours or competitors (lust and thirst being the two great and only bonds between the amatory or the amieable), I can't say, — or, rather, you know, as well as I could tell you. But as for canine recollections, as far as I could judge by a cur of mine own, (always bating Boatswain, the dearest, and, alas! the maddest of dogs,) I had one (half a *wolf* by the she side) that doted on me at ten years old, and very nearly ate me at twenty. When I thought he was going to enact Argus, he bit away the backside of my breeches [1], and never would consent to any kind of recognition, in despite of all kinds of bones which I offered him. So, let Southey blush and Homer too, as far as I can decide upon quadruped memories.

"I humbly take it, the mother knows the son that pays her jointure — a mistress her mate, till he * * and refuses salary — a friend his fellow, till he loses cash and character — and a dog his master, till he changes him.

"So, you want to know about milady and me? But let me not, as Roderick Random says, 'profane the chaste mysteries of Hymen' [2] — damn the word, I had nearly spelt it with a small *h*. I like Bell as well as you do (or did, you villain!) Bessy — and that is (or was) saying a great deal.

"Address your next to Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees, where we are going on Saturday (a bore, by the way,) to see father-in-law, Sir Jacob, and my lady's lady-mother. Write — and write more at length — both to the public and yours ever most affectionately,

"B."

LETTER 211. TO MR. MOORE.

"Seaham, Stockton-on-Tees, February 2, 1815.

"I have heard from London that you have left Chatsworth and all the women full of 'entusymusy' [3] about you, personally and poetically; and, in particular, that 'When first I met thee' has been quite overwhelming in its effect. I told you it was one of the best things you ever wrote, though that dog Power wanted you to omit part of it. They are all regretting your absence at Chatsworth, according to my informant — 'all the ladies quite,' &c. &c. &c. Stap my vitals!

"Well, now you have got home again — which I dare say is as agreeable as a 'draught of cool small beer to the scorched palate of a waking sot' — now you have got home again, I say, probably I shall hear from you. Since I wrote last, I have been transferred to my father-in-law's, with my lady and my lady's maid, &c. &c. &c. and the treacle-moon is over, and I am awake, and find myself married. My spouse and I agree to — and in — admiration. Swift says 'no *wise* man ever married;' but, for a fool, I think it the most ambrosial of all possible future states. I still think one ought to marry upon *lease;* but am very sure I should renew mine at the expiration, though next term were for ninety and nine years.

"I wish you would respond, for I am here 'oblitusque meorum obliviscendus et illis.' Pray tell me what is going on in the way of intriguery, and how the w——s and rogues of the upper Beggar's Opera go on — or rather go off — in or after marriage; or who are going to break any particular commandment. Upon this dreary coast, we have nothing but county meetings and shipwrecks: and I have this day dined upon fish, which probably dined upon the crews of several colliers lost in the late gales. But I saw the sea once more in all the glories of surf and foam, — almost equal to the Bay of Biscay, and the interesting white squalls and short seas of Archipelago memory.

"My papa, Sir Ralpho, hath recently made a speech at a Durham tax-meeting; and not only at Durham, but here, several times since after dinner. He is now, I believe, speaking it to himself (I left him in the middle) over various decanters, which can neither interrupt him nor fall asleep, — as might possibly have been the case with some of his audience. Ever thine, "B.

"I must go to tea — damn tea. I wish it was Kinnaird's brandy, and with you to lecture me about it."

LETTER 212. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Seaham, Stockton-upon-Tees, February 2. 1815.

"You will oblige me very much by making an occasional inquiry in Albany, at my chambers, whether my books, &c. are kept in tolerable order, and how far my old woman [4] continues in health and industry as keeper of

[1] ["An honest gentleman at his return
May not have the good fortune of Ulysses;
Not all lone matrons for their husbands mourn,
Or show the same dislike to suitors' kisses;
The odds are, that he finds a handsome urn
To his memory — and two or three young misses,
Born to some friend, who holds his wife and riches,
And that *his* Argus bites him by — the breeches."
Don Juan, c. iii. st. 23.]

[2] The letter H. is blotted in the MS.

[3] It was thus that, according to his account, a certain celebrated singer and actor used frequently to pronounce the word "enthusiasm."

[4] Mrs. Mule.

my old den. Your parcels have been duly received and perused; but I had hoped to receive 'Guy Mannering' before this time. I won't intrude further for the present on your avocations, professional or pleasurable, but am, as usual,

"Very truly, &c."

LETTER 213. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 4. 1815.

"I enclose you half a letter from * *, which will explain itself — at least the latter part — the former refers to private business of mine own. If Jeffrey will take such an article, and you will undertake the revision, or, indeed, any portion of the article itself (for unless *you do*, by Phœbus, I will have nothing to do with it,) we can cook up, between us three, as pretty a dish of sour-crout as ever tipped over the tongue of a bookmaker.

"You can, at any rate, try Jeffrey's inclination. Your late proposal from him made me hint this to * *, who is a much better proser and scholar than I am, and a very superior man indeed. Excuse haste — answer this.

"Ever yours most,

"B.

"P. S. — All is well at home. I wrote to you yesterday."

LETTER 214. TO MR. MOORE,

"February 10. 1815.

"My dear Tom,

"Jeffrey has been so very kind about me and my damnable works, that I would not be indirect or equivocal with him, even for a friend. So, it may be as well to tell him that it is not mine; but that if I did not firmly and truly believe it to be much better than I could offer, I would never have troubled him or you about it. You can judge between you how far it is admissible, and reject it, if not of the right sort. For my own part, I have no interest in the article one way or the other, further than to oblige * *; and should the composition be a good one, it can hurt neither party, — nor, indeed, any one, saving and excepting Mr. * * * *.

"Curse catch me if I know what H * * means or meaned about the demonstrative pronoun [1], but I admire your fear of being inoculated with the same. Have you never found out that you have a particular style of your own, which is as distinct from all other people, as Hafiz of Shiraz from Hafiz of the Morning Post?

"So you allowed B * * and such like to hum and haw you, or, rather, Lady Jersey out of her compliment, and *me* out of mine. [2] Sun-burn me, but this was pitiful-hearted. However, I will tell her all about it when I see her.

"Bell desires me to say all kinds of civilities, and assure you of her recognition and high consideration. I will tell you of our movements south, which may be in about three weeks from this present writing. By the way, don't engage yourself in any travelling expedition, as I have a plan of travel into Italy, which we will discuss. And then, think of the poesy wherewithal we should overflow, from Venice to Vesuvius, to say nothing of Greece, through all which — God willing — we might perambulate in one twelve months. If I take my wife, you can take yours; and if I leave mine, you may do the same. 'Mind you stand by me in either case, Brother Bruin.' [3]

"And believe me inveterately yours,

"B."

LETTER 215. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 22. 1815.

"Yesterday I sent off the packet and letter to Edinburgh. It consisted of forty-one pages, so that I have not added a line; but in my letter, I mentioned what passed between you and me in autumn, as my inducement for presuming to trouble him either with my own or * *'s lucubrations. I am any thing but sure that it will do; but I have told Jeffrey that if there is any decent raw material in it, he may cut it into what shape he pleases, and warp it to his liking.

"So you *won't* go abroad, then, with *me*, — but alone. I fully purpose starting much about the time you mention, and alone, too.

"I hope J. won't think me very impudent in sending * * only: there was not room for a syllable. I have avowed * * as the author, and said that you thought or said, when I met you last, that he (J.) would not be angry at the coalition, (though, alas! we have not coalesced,) and so, if I have got into a scrape, I must get out of it — Heaven knows how.

"Your Anacreon [4] is come, and with it

[1] Some remark which he told me had been made with respect to the frequent use of the demonstrative pronoun both by himself and by Sir Walter Scott.

[2] Verses to Lady Jersey (containing an allusion to Lord Byron), which I had written, while at Chatsworth, but consigned afterwards to the flames.

[3] [See Foote's farce of the "Mayor of Garrat."]

[4] A seal, with the head of Anacreon, which I had given him.

I sealed (its first impression) the packet and epistle to our patron.

"Curse the Melodies and the Tribes to boot.[1] Braham is to assist — or hath assisted — but will do no more good than a second physician. I merely interfered to oblige a whim of Kinnaird's, and all I have got by it was 'a speech' and a receipt for stewed oysters.

"'Not meet'— pray don't say so. We must meet somewhere or somehow. Newstead is out of the question, being nearly sold again, or, if not, it is uninhabitable for my spouse. Pray write again. I will soon.

"P. S. — Pray when do you come out? ever or never? I hope I have made no blunder; but I certainly think you said to me, (after W * * th, whom I first pondered upon, was given up,) that * * and I might attempt * * * *. *His* length alone prevented me from trying my part, though I should have been less severe upon the Reviewée.

"Your seal is the best and prettiest of my set, and I thank you very much therefor. I have just been — or rather, ought to be — very much shocked by the death of the Duke of Dorset. We were at school together, and there I was passionately attached to him. Since, we have never met — but once, I think, since 1805 — and it would be a paltry affectation to pretend that I had any feeling for him worth the name. But there was a time in my life when this event would have broken my heart; and all I can say for it now is that — it is not worth breaking.

"Adieu — it is all a farce."

LETTER 216. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 2. 1815.

"My dear Thom,

"Jeffrey has sent me the most friendly of all possible letters, and has accepted * *'s article. He says he has long liked not only, &c. &c. but my character. This must be *your* doing, you dog — ar'nt you ashamed of yourself, knowing me so well? This is what one gets for having you for a father confessor.

"I feel merry enough to send you a sad song.[2] You once asked me for some words which you would set. Now you may set or not, as you like, — but there they are in a legible hand[3], and not in mine, but of my own scribbling; so you may say of them what you please. Why don't you write to me? I shall make you 'a speech'[4] if you don't respond quickly.

"I am in such a state of sameness and stagnation, and so totally occupied in consuming the fruits — and sauntering — and playing dull games at cards — and yawning — and trying to read old Annual Registers and the daily papers — and gathering shells on the shore — and watching the growth of stunted gooseberry bushes in the garden — that I have neither time nor sense to say more than yours ever, "B.

"P. S. — I open my letter again to put a question to you. What would Lady Cork[5], or any other fashionable Pidcock, give to collect you and Jeffrey and me to *one* party? I have been answering his letter, which suggested this dainty query. I can't help laughing at the thoughts of your face and mine; and our anxiety to keep the Aristarch in good humour during the *early* part of a compotation, till we got drunk enough to make him 'a speech.' I think the critic would have much the best of us — of one, at least — for I don't think diffidence (I mean social) is a disease of yours."

LETTER 217. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 8. 1815.

"An event — the death of poor Dorset — and the recollection of what I once felt, and ought to have felt now, but could not — set me pondering, and finally into the train of thought which you have in your hands. I am very glad you like them, for I flatter myself they will pass as an imitation of your style. If I could imitate it well, I should have no great ambition of originality — I wish I could make you exclaim with Dennis, 'That's my thunder, by G—d!'[6] I wrote

[1] I had taken the liberty of laughing a little at the manner in which some of his Hebrew Melodies had been set to music.

[2] The verses enclosed were those melancholy ones now printed in his works, "There's not a joy the world can give like those it takes away." [See *Works*, p. 560.]

[3] The MS. was in the handwriting of Lady Byron.

[4] These allusions to "a speech" are connected with a little incident, not worth mentioning, which had amused us both when I was in town. He was rather fond (and had been always so, as may be seen in his early letters) of thus harping on some conventional phrase or joke.

[5] ["The Hon. Mary Monkton, daughter of the first Viscount Galway, born April, 1747; married, in 1786, to Edmund, seventh Earl of Cork and Orrery. Lodge's Peerage dates her birth 1737, but this is a mistake, for an elder sister of the same name. Now (1838) in her *ninety-second* year, Lady Cork still entertains and enjoys society with extraordinary health, spirits, and vivacity; and Boswell's description of her *fifty-seven years ago* as 'the lively Miss Monkton, who used always to have the finest *bit of blue* at her parties, is characteristic to this day."— *Croker on Boswell.*]

[6] [——"'Tis yours to shake the soul
With thunder rumbling from the mustard bowl."
Dunciad.

"The old way of making thunder and mustard were the same; but since, it is more advantageously performed by

them with a view to your setting them, and as a present to Power, if he would accept the words, and *you* did not think yourself degraded, for once in a way, by marrying them to music.

"Sun-burn Nathan!—why do you always twit me with his vile Ebrew nasalities? Have I not told you it was all Kinnaird's doing, and my own exquisite facility of temper? But thou wilt be a wag, Thomas; and see what you get for it. Now for my revenge.

"Depend—and perpend—upon it that your opinion of **'s poem will travel through one or other of the quintuple correspondents, till it reaches the ear, and the liver of the author.[1] Your adventure, however, is truly laughable—but how could you be such a potatoe? You 'a brother' (of the quill) too, 'near the throne,' to confide to a man's *own publisher* (who has 'bought,' or rather sold, 'golden opinions' about him) such a damnatory parenthesis! 'Between you and me,' quotha—it reminds me of a passage in the Heir at Law—'Tête-à-tête with Lady Duberly, I suppose.'—'No—tête-à-tête with *five hundred people;*' and your confidential communication will doubtless be in circulation to that amount, in a short time, with several additions, and in several letters, all signed L. H. R. O. B., &c. &c. &c.

"We leave this place to-morrow, and shall stop on our way to town (in the interval of taking a house there) at Col. Leigh's, near Newmarket, where any epistle of yours will find its welcome way.

"I have been very comfortable here,—listening to that d—d monologue, which elderly gentlemen call conversation, and in which my pious father-in-law repeats himself every evening—save one, when he played upon the fiddle. However, they have been very kind and hospitable, and I like them and the place vastly, and I hope they will live many happy months. Bell is in health, and unvaried good-humour and behaviour. But we are all in the agonies of packing and parting; and, I suppose, by this time to-morrow I shall be stuck in the chariot with my chin upon a band-box. I have prepared, however, another carriage for the abigail, and all the trumpery which our wives drag along with them.

"Ever thine, most affectionately,

"B."

LETTER 218. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 17. 1815.

"I meaned to write to you before on the subject of your loss[2]; but the recollection of the uselessness and worthlessness of any observations on such events prevented me. I shall only now add, that I rejoice to see you bear it so well, and that I trust time will enable Mrs. M. to sustain it better. Every thing should be done to divert and occupy her with other thoughts and cares, and I am sure that all that can be done will.

"Now to your letter. Napoleon—but the papers will have told you all. I quite think with you upon the subject, and for my *real* thoughts this time last year, I would refer you to the last pages of the Journal I gave you. I can forgive the rogue for utterly falsifying every line of mine Ode—which I take to be the last and uttermost stretch of human magnanimity. Do you remember the story of a certain Abbé, who wrote a treatise on the Swedish Constitution and proved it indissoluble and eternal? Just as he had corrected the last sheet, news came that Gustavus III. had destroyed this immortal government. 'Sir,' quoth the Abbé, 'the King of Sweden may overthrow the *constitution*, but not *my book!!*' I think *of* the Abbé, but not *with* him.

"Making every allowance for talent and most consummate daring, there is, after all, a good deal in luck or destiny. He might have been stopped by our frigates—or wrecked in the Gulf of Lyons, which is particularly tempestuous—or—a thousand things. But he is certainly Fortune's favourite, and

> "Once fairly set out on his party of pleasure,
> Taking towns at his liking and crowns at his leisure,
> From Elba to Lyons and Paris he goes,
> Making *balls for* the ladies, and *bows* to his foes.

You must have seen the account of his driving into the middle of the royal army, and the immediate effect of his pretty speeches.

troughs of wood with stops in them. Whether Dennis was the inventor of that improvement, I know not; but it is certain, that being once at a tragedy of a new author he fell into a great passion at hearing some, and cried, "'Sdeath! that is my thunder.'" — WARBURTON.]

[1] He here alludes to a circumstance which I had communicated to him in a preceding letter. In writing to one of the numerous partners of a well-known publishing establishment (with which I have since been lucky enough to form a more intimate connection) I had said confidentially (as I thought), in reference to a poem that had just appeared,—"Between you and me, I do not much admire Mr. * * 's poem." The letter being chiefly upon business, was answered through the regular business channel, and, to my dismay, concluded with the following words:—"*We* are very sorry that you do not approve of Mr. * *'s new poem, and are your obedient, &c. &c. L. H. R. O., &c. &c.'"

[2] The death of his infant god-daughter, Olivia Byron Moore.

And now if he don't drub the Allies, there is 'no purchase in money.' If he can take France by himself, the devil's in't if he don't repulse the invaders, when backed by those celebrated sworders — those boys of the blade, the Imperial Guard, and the old and new army. It is impossible not to be dazzled and overwhelmed by his character and career. Nothing ever so disappointed me as his abdication, and nothing could have reconciled me to him but some such revival as his recent exploit; though no one could anticipate such a complete and brilliant renovation.

"To your question, I can only answer that there have been some symptoms which look a little gestatory. It is a subject upon which I am not particularly anxious, except that I think it would please her uncle, Lord Wentworth, and her father and mother. The former (Lord W.) is now in town, and in very indifferent health. You, perhaps, know that his property, amounting to seven or eight thousand a year, will eventually devolve upon Bell. But the old gentleman has been so very kind to her and me, that I hardly know how to wish him in heaven, if he can be comfortable on earth. Her father is still in the country.

"We mean to metropolise to-morrow, and you will address your next to Piccadilly. We have got the Duchess of Devon's house there, she being in France.

"I don't care what Power says to secure the property of the Song, so that it is *not* complimentary to me, nor any thing about 'condescending' or '*noble* author' — both 'vile phrases,' as Polonius says.

"Pray, let me hear from you, and when you mean to be in town. Your continental scheme is impracticable for the present. I have to thank you for a longer letter than usual, which I hope will induce you to tax my gratitude still further in the same way.

"You never told me about 'Longman' and 'next winter,' and I am *not* a 'mile-stone.'" [1]

LETTER 219. TO MR. COLERIDGE.

"Piccadilly, March 31. 1815.

"Dear Sir,

"It will give me great pleasure to comply with your request, though I hope there is still taste enough left amongst us to render it almost unnecessary, sordid and interested as, it must be admitted, many of 'the trade' are, where circumstances give them an advantage. I trust you do not permit yourself to be depressed by the temporary partiality of what is called 'the public' for the favourites of the moment; all experience is against the permanency of such impressions. You must have lived to see many of these pass away, and will survive many more — I mean personally, for *poetically*, I would not insult you by a comparison.

"If I may be permitted, I would suggest that there never was such an opening for tragedy. In Kean, there is an actor worthy of expressing the thoughts of the characters which you have every power of embodying; and I cannot but regret that the part of Ordonio was disposed of before his appearance at Drury Lane. [2] We have had nothing to be mentioned in the same breath with 'Remorse' for very many years; and I should think that the reception of that play was sufficient to encourage the highest hopes of author and audience. It is to be hoped that you are proceeding in a career which could not but be successful. With my best respects to Mr. Bowles, I have the honour to be,

"Your obliged and very obedient servant,

"BYRON.

"P. S. — You mention my 'Satire,' lampoon, or whatever you or others please to call it. I can only say, that it was written when I was very young and very angry, and has been a thorn in my side ever since; more particularly as almost all the persons animadverted upon became subsequently my acquaintances, and some of them my friends, which is 'heaping fire upon an enemy's head,' and forgiving me too readily to permit me to forgive myself. The part applied to you is pert, and petulant, and shallow enough [3]; but, although I have long done every thing in my power to suppress the circulation of the whole thing, I shall always regret the wantonness or generality of many of its attempted attacks."

[1] I had accused him of having entirely forgot that, in a preceding letter, I had informed him of my intention to publish with the Messrs. Longman in the ensuing winter, and added that, in giving him this information, I found I had been — to use an elegant Irish metaphor — "whistling jigs to a mile-stone."

[2] ["Remorse" was brought out at Drury Lane, with considerable success, in January 1813. The part of Ordonio was intrusted to Rae. For an able analysis of this tragedy, see *Quart. Rev.* vol. xi. p. 177.]

[3] [— "none in lofty numbers can surpass
The bard who soars to elegise an ass:
So well the subject suits his noble mind,
He brays, the laureat of the long-ear'd kind."
See *Works*, p. 425.]

CHAPTER XXIV.

1815.

LONDON. — PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE WITH SIR WALTER SCOTT. — SIR WALTER'S RECOLLECTIONS OF LORD BYRON. — DEATH OF LORD WENTWORTH. — ANECDOTES. — DRURY-LANE COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT. — LETTERS TO MOORE. — DEATH OF WHITBREAD. — SOTHEBY'S IVAN. — STAGE ANECDOTES. — SHERIDAN AND COLMAN. — MONK LEWIS. — LETTERS TO MOORE AND MURRAY.

It was in the course of this spring that Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott became, for the first time, personally acquainted with each other. Mr. Murray, having been previously on a visit to the latter gentleman, had been intrusted by him with a superb Turkish dagger, as a present to Lord Byron; and the noble poet, on their meeting this year in London, — the only time when these two great men had ever an opportunity of enjoying each other's society, — presented to Sir Walter, in return, a vase containing some human bones that had been dug up from under a part of the old walls of Athens. The reader, however, will be much better pleased to have these particulars in the words of Sir Walter Scott himself, who, with that good-nature which renders him no less amiable than he is admirable, has found time, in the midst of all his marvellous labours for the world, to favour me with the following interesting communication: [1] —

"My first acquaintance with Byron began in a manner rather doubtful. I was so far from having any thing to do with the offensive criticism in the Edinburgh, that I remember remonstrating against it with our friend, the editor, because I thought the 'Hours of Idleness' treated with undue severity. They were written, like all juvenile poetry, rather from the recollection of what had pleased the author in others than what had been suggested by his own imagination; but, nevertheless, I thought they contained some passages of noble promise. I was so much impressed with this, that I had thoughts of writing to the author; but some exaggerated reports concerning his peculiarities, and a natural unwillingness to intrude an opinion which was uncalled for, induced me to relinquish the idea.

"When Byron wrote his famous Satire, I had my share of flagellation among my betters. My crime was having written a poem (Marmion, I think) for a thousand pounds; which was no otherwise true than that I sold the copy-right for that sum. Now, not to mention that an author can hardly be censured for accepting such a sum as the booksellers are willing to give him, especially as the gentlemen of the trade made no complaints of their bargain [2], I thought the interference with my private affairs was rather beyond the limits of literary satire. On the other hand, Lord Byron paid me, in several passages, so much more praise than I deserved, that I must have been more irritable than I have ever felt upon such subjects, not to sit down contented, and think no more about the matter.

"I was very much struck, with all the rest of the world, at the vigour and force of imagination displayed in the first cantos of Childe Harold, and the other splendid productions which Lord Byron flung from him to the public with a promptitude that savoured of profusion. My own popularity, as a poet, was then on the wane, and I was unaffectedly pleased to see an author of so much

[1] A few passages at the beginning of these recollections have been omitted, as containing particulars relative to Lord Byron's mother, which have already been mentioned in the early part of this work. Among these, however, there is one anecdote, the repetition of which will be easily pardoned, on account of the infinitely greater interest as well as authenticity imparted to its details by coming from such an eyewitness as Sir Walter Scott: — "I remember," he says, "having seen Lord Byron's mother before she was married, and a certain coincidence rendered the circumstance rather remarkable. It was during Mrs. Siddons's first or second visit to Edinburgh, when the music of that wonderful actress's voice, looks, manner, and person, produced the strongest effect which could possibly be exerted by a human being upon her fellow-creatures. Nothing of the kind that I ever witnessed approached it by a hundred degrees. The high state of excitation was aided by the difficulties of obtaining entrance, and the exhausting length of time that the audience were contented to wait until the piece commenced. When the curtain fell, a large proportion of the ladies were generally in hysterics.

"I remember Miss Gordon of Ghight, in particular, harrowing the house by the desperate and wild way in which she shrieked out Mrs. Siddons's exclamation, in the character of Isabella, 'Oh my Byron! Oh my Byron!' A well-known medical gentleman, the benevolent Dr. Alexander Wood, tendered his assistance; but the thick-pressed audience could not for a long time make way for the doctor to approach his patient, or the patient the physician. The remarkable circumstance was, that the lady had not then seen Captain Byron, who, like Sir Toby, made her conclude with 'Oh!' as she had begun with it."

[2] ["On the contrary, the sale of the poem was so far beyond their expectation, as to induce them to supply the author's cellars with what is always an acceptable present to a young Scottish housekeeper, namely, a hogshead of excellent claret. — Introd. to Marmion: *Poet. Works*, vol. vii. p. 12.]

power and energy taking the field. Mr. John Murray happened to be in Scotland that season; and as I mentioned to him the pleasure I should have in making Lord Byron's acquaintance, he had the kindness to mention my wish to his Lordship, which led to some correspondence.

"It was in the spring of 1815 that, chancing to be in London, I had the advantage of a personal introduction to Lord Byron. Report had prepared me to meet a man of peculiar habits and a quick temper, and I had some doubts whether we were likely to suit each other in society. I was most agreeably disappointed in this respect. I found Lord Byron in the highest degree courteous, and even kind. We met, for an hour or two almost daily, in Mr. Murray's drawing-room, and found a great deal to say to each other. We also met frequently in parties and evening society, so that for about two months I had the advantage of a considerable intimacy with this distinguished individual. Our sentiments agreed a good deal, except upon the subjects of religion and politics, upon neither of which I was inclined to believe that Lord Byron entertained very fixed opinions. I remember saying to him, that I really thought, that if he lived a few years he would alter his sentiments. He answered, rather sharply, 'I suppose you are one of those who prophesy I will turn Methodist.' I replied, 'No — I don't expect your conversion to be of such an ordinary kind. I would rather look to see you retreat upon the Catholic faith, and distinguish yourself by the austerity of your penances.[1] The species of religion to which you must, or may, one day attach yourself must exercise a strong power on the imagination.' He smiled gravely, and seemed to allow I might be right.

"On politics, he used sometimes to express a high strain of what is now called Liberalism; but it appeared to me that the pleasure it afforded him as a vehicle of displaying his wit and satire against individuals in office was at the bottom of this habit of thinking, rather than any real conviction of the political principles on which he talked. He was certainly proud of his rank and ancient family, and, in that respect, as much an aristocrat as was consistent with good sense and good breeding. Some disgusts, how adopted I know not, seemed to me to have given this peculiar and, as it appeared to me, contradictory cast of mind: but, at heart, I would have termed Byron a patrician on principle.

"Lord Byron's reading did not seem to me to have been very extensive either in poetry or history. Having the advantage of him in that respect, and possessing a good competent share of such reading as is little read, I was sometimes able to put under his eye objects which had for him the interest of novelty. I remember particularly repeating to him the fine poem of Hardyknute[2], an imitation of the old Scottish Ballad, with which he was so much affected, that some one who was in the same apartment asked me what I could possibly have been telling Byron by which he was so much agitated.[3]

"I saw Byron, for the last time, in 1815, after I returned from France. He dined, or lunched, with me at Long's in Bond Street. I never saw him so full of gaiety and good-humour, to which the presence of Mr. Mathews, the comedian, added not a little. Poor Terry was also present. After one of the gayest parties I ever was present at, my fellow-traveller, Mr. Scott, of Gala, and I set off for Scotland, and I never saw Lord Byron again. Several letters passed between us — one perhaps every half year. Like the old heroes in Homer, we exchanged gifts: — I gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with gold, which had been the property of the redoubted Elfi Bey. But I was to play the part of Diomed, in the Iliad; for Byron sent me, some time after, a large sepulchral vase of silver. It was full of dead men's bones, and had inscriptions on two sides of the base. One ran thus: — 'The bones contained in this urn were found in certain ancient sepulchres within the land walls of Athens, in the month of February, 1811.' The other face bears the lines of Juvenal: —

"Expende — quot libras in duce summo invenies.
— Mors sola fatetur quantula hominum corpuscula."
Juv. x.[4]

"To these I have added a third inscription, in these words — 'The gift of Lord Byron to Walter Scott.'[5] There was a letter

[1] ["When I turn thirty, I will turn devout: I feel a great vocation that way in Catholic churches, and when I hear the organ."— *Lord Byron to Mr. Murray*, April 9. 1817.]

[2] [Mr. Lockhart says that on the blank leaf of his copy of Allan Ramsay's "Evergreen," Sir Walter Scott has written, "Hardyknute was the first poem that I ever learnt — the last that I shall forget."—*Life of Scott*, vol. i. p. 83.]

[3] ["I have found out the seal cut on Murray's letter. It is meant for Sir Walter Scott; but it does not do him justice. Scott's — particularly when he recites — is a very intelligent countenance."—*Byron Diary*, 1821.]

[4] [See *antè*, p. 234.]

[5] Mr. Murray had, at the time of giving the vase, suggested to Lord Byron, that it would increase the value of the gift to add some such inscription; but the feeling of

with this vase more valuable to me than the gift itself, from the kindness with which the donor expressed himself towards me. I left it naturally in the urn with the bones, — but it is now missing. As the theft was not of a nature to be practised by a mere domestic, I am compelled to suspect the inhospitality of some individual of higher station, — most gratuitously exercised certainly, since, after what I have here said, no one will probably choose to boast of possessing this literary curiosity.

"We had a good deal of laughing, I remember, on what the public might be supposed to think, or say, concerning the gloomy and ominous nature of our mutual gifts.

"I think I can add little more to my recollections of Byron. He was often melancholy, — almost gloomy. When I observed him in this humour, I used either to wait till it went off of its own accord, or till some natural and easy mode occurred of leading him into conversation, when the shadows almost always left his countenance, like the mist rising from a landscape. In conversation he was very animated.

"I met with him very frequently in society; our mutual acquaintances doing me the honour to think that he liked to meet with me. Some very agreeable parties I can recollect, — particularly one at Sir George Beaumont's, where the amiable landlord had assembled some persons distinguished for talent. Of these I need only mention the late Sir Humphry Davy, whose talents for literature were as remarkable as his empire over science. Mr. Richard Sharp and Mr. Rogers were also present.

"I think I also remarked in Byron's temper starts of suspicion, when he seemed to pause and consider whether there had not been a secret, and perhaps offensive, meaning in something casually said to him. In this case, I also judged it best to let his mind, like a troubled spring, work itself clear, which it did in a minute or two. I was considerably older, you will recollect, than my noble friend, and had no reason to fear his misconstruing my sentiments towards him, nor had I ever the slightest reason to doubt that they were kindly returned on his part. If I had occasion to be mortified by the display of genius which threw into the shade such pretensions as I was then supposed to possess, I might console myself that, in my own case, the materials of mental happiness had been mingled in a greater proportion.

"I rummage my brains in vain for what often rushes into my head unbidden, — little traits and sayings which recall his looks, manner, tone, and gestures; and I have always continued to think that a crisis of life was arrived in which a new career of fame was opened to him, and that had he been permitted to start upon it, he would have obliterated the memory of such parts of his life as friends would wish to forget."

LETTER 220. TO MR. MOORE.

"April 23. 1815.

"Lord Wentworth died last week. The bulk of his property (from seven to eight thousand per ann.) is entailed on Lady Milbanke and Lady Byron. The first is gone to take possession in Leicestershire, and attend the funeral, &c. this day.

"I have mentioned the facts of the settlement of Lord W.'s property, because the newspapers, with their usual accuracy, have been making all kinds of blunders in their statement. His will is just as expected — the principal part settled on Lady Milbanke (now Noel) and Bell, and a separate estate left for sale to pay debts (which are not great) and legacies to his natural son and daughter.

"Mrs. Wilmot's tragedy was last night damned. They may bring it on again, and probably will; but damned it was, — not a word of the last act audible. I went (*malgré* that I ought to have stayed at home in sackcloth for unc., but I could not resist the *first* night of any thing) to a private and quiet nook of my private box, and witnessed the whole process. The first three acts, with transient gushes of applause, oozed patiently but heavily on. I must say it was badly acted, particularly by Kean, who was groaned upon in the third act, — something about 'horror — such a horror' was the cause. Well! the fourth act became as muddy and turbid as need be; but the fifth — what Garrick used to call (like a fool) the *concoction* of a play[2] — the fifth act stuck fast

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the noble poet on this subject will be understood from the following answer which he returned: —

"April 9. 1815.

"Thanks for the books. I have great objection to your proposition about inscribing the vase, — which is, that it would appear *ostentatious* on my part: and of course I must send it as it is, without any alteration.

"Yours, &c."

[1] [On the 22nd of April, "Ina," a tragedy by Mrs. Wilmot (now Lady Dacre), in which Kean played the principal character, was damned at Drury Lane.]

[2] ["JOHNSON: 'Mr. Hawkins came to me and complained, and told me that Garrick said his play was wrong in the *concoction*. Now, what is the concoction of a play?' — GARRICK: 'I — I — I — said, *first* concoction!' — JOHNSON: 'Well, he left out *first*.'" — BOSWELL. "Gar-

at the king's prayer. You know he says, 'he never went to bed without saying them, and did not like to omit them now.' But he was no sooner upon his knees, than the audience got upon their legs — the damnable pit — and roared, and groaned, and hissed, and whistled. Well, that was choked a little; but the ruffian-scene — the penitent peasantry — and killing the bishop and princes — oh, it was all over! The curtain fell upon unheard actors, and the announcement attempted by Kean for Monday was equally ineffectual. Mrs. Bartley was so frightened, that, though the people were tolerably quiet, the epilogue[1] was quite inaudible to half the house. In short, — you know all. I clapped till my hands were skinless, and so did Sir James Mackintosh, who was with me in the box. All the world were in the house, from the Jerseys, Greys, &c. &c. downwards. But it would not do. It is, after all, not an *acting* play; good language, but no power. * * * Women (saving Joanna Baillie) cannot write tragedy: they have not seen enough nor felt enough of life for it. I think Semiramis or Catherine II. might have written (could they have been unqueened) a rare play.

"It is, however, a good warning not to risk or write tragedies. I never had much bent that way; but if I had, this would have cured me.

"Ever, carissime Thom.,
"Thine, B."

LETTER 221. TO MR. MURRAY.

"May 21. 1815.

"You must have thought it very odd, not to say ungrateful, that I made no mention of the drawings[2], &c. when I had the pleasure of seeing you this morning. The fact is, that till this moment I had not seen them, nor heard of their arrival: they were carried up into the library, where I have not been till just now, and no intimation given to me of their coming. The present is so very magnificent, that — in short I leave Lady Byron to thank you for it herself, and merely send this to apologise for a piece of apparent and unintentional neglect on my own part. "Yours, &c."

rick had high authority for this expression. Dryden uses it in his preface to Œdipus."—MALONE. "And surely 'concoction' alone was as good as *first* concoction; which latter phrase Johnson was willing to admit: but it appears, from the Garrick Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 6., that Garrick really wrote '*first* concoction.'"— CROKER."]

[1] [The prologue was written by the Hon. William Lamb (now Viscount Melbourne); the epilogue by Mr. Thomas Moore.]

[2] Mr. Murray had presented Lady Byron with twelve drawings, by Stothard, from Lord Byron's Poems.

LETTER. 222. TO MR. MOORE.[3]

"13. Piccadilly Terrace, June 12. 1815.

"I have nothing to offer in behalf of my late silence, except the most inveterate and ineffable laziness; but I am too supine to invent a lie, or I *certainly* should, being ashamed of the truth. Kinnaird, I hope, has appeased your magnanimous indignation at his blunders. I wished and wish you were in the Committee, with all my heart.[4] It seems so hopeless a business, that the company of a friend would be quite consoling, — but more of this when we meet. In the mean time, you are entreated to prevail upon Mrs. Esterre to engage herself. I believe she has been written to, but your influence, in person or proxy, would probably go further than our proposals. What they are, I know not; all *my* new function consists in listening to the despair of Cavendish Bradshaw, the hopes of Kinnaird, the wishes of Lord Essex, the complaints of Whitbread, and the calculations of Peter Moore, — all of which, and whom, seem totally at variance. C. Bradshaw wants to light the theatre with *gas*, which may, perhaps (if the vulgar be believed), poison half the audience, and all the *dramatis personæ*. Essex has endeavoured to persuade Kean not to get drunk; the consequence of which is, that he has never been sober since. Kinnaird, with equal success, would have convinced Raymond that he, the said Raymond, had too much salary. Whitbread wants us to assess the pit another sixpence, — a d—d insidious proposition, — which will end in an O. P. combustion. To crown all, Robins, the auctioneer has the impudence to be displeased, because he has no dividend. The villain is a proprietor of shares, and a long-lunged orator in the meetings. I hear he has prophesied our incapacity, — 'a foregone conclusion,' whereof I hope to give him signal proofs before we are done.

"Will you give us an opera? No, I'll be sworn; but I wish you would.

"To go on with the poetical world, Walter Scott has gone back to Scotland. Murray, the bookseller, has been cruelly cudgelled of misbegotten knaves, 'in Kendal

[3] This and the following letter were addressed to me in Ireland, whither I had gone about the middle of the preceding month.

[4] He had lately become one of the members of the Sub-Committee, (consisting, besides himself, of the persons mentioned in this letter,) who had taken upon themselves the management of Drury Lane Theatre; and it had been his wish, on the first construction of the Committee, that I should be one of his colleagues. To some mistake in the mode of conveying this proposal to me, he alludes in the preceding sentence.

Green,' at Newington Butts, in his way home from a purlieu dinner, — and robbed — would you believe it? — of three or four bonds of forty pound a piece, and a sealring of his grandfather's, worth a million! This is his version, — but others opine that D'Israeli, with whom he dined, knocked him down with his last publication, 'The Quarrels of Authors,' in a dispute about copyright. Be that as it may, the newspapers have teemed with his 'injuria formæ,' and he has been embrocated, and invisible to all but the apothecary ever since.

"Lady B. is better than three months advanced in her progress towards maternity, and, we hope, likely to go well through with it. We have been very little out this season, as I wish to keep her quiet in her present situation. Her father and mother have changed their names to Noel, in compliance with Lord Wentworth's will, and in complaisance to the property bequeathed by him.

"I hear that you have been gloriously received by the Irish, — and so you ought. But don't let them kill you with claret and kindness at the national dinner in your honour, which, I hear and hope, is in contemplation. If you will tell me the day, I'll get drunk myself on this side of the water, and waft you an applauding hiccup over the Channel.

"Of politics, we have nothing but the yell for war; and C * * h [Castlereagh] is preparing his head for the pike, on which we shall see it carried before he has done. The loan has made every body sulky. I hear often from Paris, but in direct contradiction to the home statements of our hirelings. Of domestic doings, there has been nothing since Lady D * *. Not a divorce stirring, — but a good many in embryo, in the shape of marriages.

"I enclose you an epistle received this morning from I know not whom; but I think it will amuse you. The writer must be a rare fellow. [1]

"P. S. — A gentleman named D'Alton (not your Dalton) has sent me a National Poem called 'Dermid.' The same cause which prevented my writing to you operated against my wish to write to him an epistle of thanks. If you see him, will you make all kinds of fine speeches for me, and tell him that I am the laziest and most ungrateful of mortals?

"A word more; — don't let Sir John Stevenson (as an evidence on trials for copy-right, &c.) talk about the price of your next poem, or they will come upon you for the *property tax* for it. I am serious, and have just heard a long story of the rascally tax-men making Scott pay for his. [2] So, take care. Three hundred is a devil of a deduction out of three thousand."

LETTER 223. TO MR. MOORE.

"July 7. 1815.

"'Grata superveniet,' &c. &c. I had written to you again, but burnt the letter, because I began to think you seriously hurt at my indolence, and did not know how the buffoonery it contained might be taken. In the mean time, I have yours, and all is well.

"I had given over all hopes of yours. By-the-by, my 'grata superveniet' should be in the present tense; for I perceive it looks now as if it applied to this present scrawl reaching you, whereas it is to the receipt of thy Kilkenny epistle that I have tacked that venerable sentiment.

"Poor Whitbread died yesterday morning, — a sudden and severe loss. His health had been wavering, but so fatal an attack was not apprehended. He dropped down, and I believe never spoke afterwards. I perceive Perry attributes his death to Drury Lane, — a consolatory encouragement to the new Committee. I have no doubt that * *, who is of a plethoric habit, will be bled immediately; and as I have, since my marriage, lost much of my paleness, and — 'horresco referens' (for I hate even *moderate* fat) — that happy slenderness, to which when I first knew you, I had attained, I by no means sit easy under this dispensation of the Morning Chronicle. Every one must

[1] The following is the enclosure here referred to: —

"Darlington, June 3. 1815.

"My Lord,

"I have lately purchased a set of your works, and am quite vexed that you have not cancelled the Ode to Buonaparte. It certainly was prematurely written, without thought or reflection. Providence has now brought him to reign over millions again, while the same Providence keeps as it were in a garrison another potentate, who, in the language of Mr. Burke, 'he hurled from his throne.' See if you cannot make amends for your folly, and consider that, in almost every respect, human nature is the same, in every clime and in every period, and don't act the part of a *foolish boy*. — Let not Englishmen talk of the stretch of tyrants, while the torrents of blood shed in the East Indies cry aloud to Heaven for retaliation. Learn, good sir, not to cast the first stone.

I remain your Lordship's servant,

"J. R * *."

[2] [Such a claim was set up by the income tax commissioners in 1813; but Sir Walter Scott resisted, and ultimately carried his point.—See *Lockhart's Life of Sir W. Scott*, vol. iii. p. 100.]

regret the loss of Whitbread; he was surely a great and very good man.

"Paris is taken for the second time. I presume it, for the future, will have an anniversary capture. In the late battles, like all the world, I have lost a connexion,—poor Frederic Howard, the best of his race.[1] I had little intercourse, of late years, with his family, but I never saw or heard but good of him. Hobhouse's brother is killed. In short, the havoc has not left a family out of its tender mercies.

"Every hope of a republic is over, and we must go on under the old system. But I am sick at heart of politics and slaughters; and the luck which Providence is pleased to lavish on Lord Castlereagh is only a proof of the little value the gods set upon prosperity, when they permit such *** s as he and that drunken corporal, old Blucher, to bully their betters. From this, however, Wellington should be excepted. He *is* a man,—and the Scipio of our Hannibal. However, he may thank the Russian frosts, which destroyed the *real élite* of the French army, for the successes of Waterloo.

"La! Moore—how you blasphemes about 'Parnassus' and 'Moses!' I am ashamed for you. Won't you do any thing for the drama? We beseech an Opera. Kinnaird's blunder was partly mine. I wanted you of all things in the Committee, and so did he. But we are now glad you were wiser; for it is, I doubt, a bitter business.

"When shall we see you in England? Sir Ralph Noel (*late* Milbanke—he don't promise to be *late* Noel in a hurry), finding that one man can't inhabit two houses, has given his place in the north to me for a habitation; and there Lady B. threatens to be brought to bed in November. Sir R. and my Lady Mother are to quarter at Kirby—Lord Wentworth's that was. Perhaps you and Mrs. Moore will pay us a visit at Seaham in the course of the autumn. If so, you and I (*without* our *wives*) will take a *lark* to Edinburgh and embrace Jeffrey. It is not much above one hundred miles from us. But all this, and other high matters, we will discuss at meeting, which I hope will be on your return. We don't leave town till August.

"Ever yours, &c.

"B."

[1] [The Honourable Frederick Howard, third son of the Earl of Carlisle.

——"when shower'd
The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lour'd,
They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young gallant Howard!"

Childe Harold, c. iii. st. 29. See *Works*, p. 31.]

LETTER 224. TO MR. SOTHEBY.

"Sept. 15. 1815. Piccadilly Terrace.

"Dear Sir,

"'Ivan' is accepted, and will be put in progress on Kean's arrival.

"The theatrical gentlemen have a confident hope of its success. I know not that any alterations for the stage will be necessary; if any, they will be trifling, and you shall be duly apprised. I would suggest that you should not attend any except the latter rehearsals—the managers have requested me to state this to you. You can see them, viz. Dibdin and Rae, whenever you please, and I will do any thing you wish to be done on your suggestion, in the mean time.

"Mrs. Mardyn is not yet out, and nothing can be determined till she has made her appearance—I mean as to her capacity for the part you mention, which I take it for granted is not in Ivan—as I think Ivan may be performed very well without her. But of that hereafter. Ever yours, very truly,

"BYRON.

"P. S.—You will be glad to hear that the season has begun uncommonly well—great and constant houses—the performers in much harmony with the Committee and one another, and as much good-humour as can be preserved in such complicated and extensive interests as the Drury Lane proprietary."

TO MR. SOTHEBY.

"September 25. 1815.

"Dear Sir,

"I think it would be advisable for you to see the acting managers when convenient, as there must be points on which you will want to confer; the objection I stated was merely on the part of the performers, and is *general* and not *particular* to this instance. I thought it as well to mention it at once—and some of the rehearsals you will doubtless see, notwithstanding.

"Rae, I rather think, has his eye on Naritzin for himself. He is a more popular performer than Bartley, and certainly the cast will be stronger with him in it: besides, he is one of the managers, and will feel doubly interested if he can act in both capacities. Mrs. Bartley will be Petrowna;—as to the Empress, I know not what to say or think. The truth is, we are not amply furnished with tragic women; but make the best of those we have,—you can take your choice of them. We have all great hopes of the success—on which, setting aside other considerations, we are particularly anxious,

as being the first tragedy to be brought out since the old Committee.

"By the way — I have a charge against you. As the great Mr. Dennis roared out on a similar occasion — 'By G—d *that* is *my* thunder!' so do I exclaim, '*This* is *my* lightning!' I allude to a speech of Ivan's, in the scene with Petrowna and the Empress, where the thought and almost expression are similar to Conrad's in the 3d canto of 'The Corsair.' I, however, do not say this to accuse you, but to exempt myself from suspicion [1], as there is a priority of six months' publication, on my part, between the appearane of that composition and of your tragedies.

"George Lambe meant to have written to you. If you don't like to confer with the managers at present, I will attend to your wishes — so state them. Yours very truly,

"Byron."

Letter 225. TO MR. TAYLOR.

"13. Terrace, Piccadilly, September 25. 1815.

"Dear Sir,

"I am sorry you should feel uneasy at what has by no means troubled me. [2] If your editor, his correspondents, and readers are amused, I have no objection to be the theme of all the ballads he can find room for — provided his lucubrations are confined to *me* only.

"It is a long time since things of this kind have ceased to 'fright me from my propriety;' nor do I know any similar attack which would induce me to turn again, — unless it involved those connected with me, whose qualities, I hope, are such as to exempt them in the eyes of those who bear no good-will to myself. In such a case, supposing it to occur — to *reverse* the saying of Dr. Johnson, — 'what the law could not do for me, I would do for myself,' be the consequences what they might.

"I return you, with many thanks, Colman and the letters. The poems, I hope, you intended me to keep; — at least, I shall do so till I hear the contrary. Very truly yours."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"Sept. 25. 1815.

"Will you publish the Drury Lane 'Magpie?' or, what is more, will you give fifty, or even forty, pounds for the copyright of the said? I have undertaken to ask you this question on behalf of the translator, and wish you would. We can't get so much for him by ten pounds from any body else, and I, knowing your magnificence, would be glad of an answer. Ever, &c."

Letter 226. TO MR. MURRAY.

"September 27. 1816.

"That's right and splendid, and becoming a publisher of high degree. Mr. Concanen (the translator) will be delighted, and pay his washerwoman; and, in reward for your bountiful behaviour in this instance, I won't ask you to publish any more for Drury Lane, or any lane whatever, again. You will have no tragedy or any thing else from me, I assure you, and may think yourself lucky in having got rid of me, for good and all, without more damage. But I'll tell you what we will do for you, — act Sotheby's Ivan, which will succeed; and then your present and next impression of the dramas of that dramatic gentleman will be expedited to your heart's content: and if there is any thing very good, you shall have the refusal; but you sha'n't have any more requests.

"Sotheby has got a thought, and almost the words, from the third canto of The

[1] Notwithstanding this precaution of the poet, the coincidence in question was, but a few years after, triumphantly cited in support of the sweeping charge of plagiarism brought against him by some scribblers. The following are Mr Sotheby's lines: —

"And I have leapt
In transport from my flinty couch, to welcome
The thunder as it burst upon my roof,
And beckon'd to the lightning, as it flash'd
And sparkled on these fetters."

I have since been informed by Mr. Sotheby that, though not published, these lines had been written long before the appearance of Lord Byron's poem.

[1] [The following is the passage in the Corsair: —

"Loud sung the wind above; and, doubly loud,
Shook o'er his turret cell the thunder-cloud;
And flash'd the lightning by the latticed bar,
To him more genial than the midnight star:
Close to the glimmering grate he dragg'd his chain,
And hoped *that* peril might not prove in vain:
He rais'd his iron hand to Heaven, and pray'd
One pitying flash to mar the form it made."

Corsair.]

[2] Mr. Taylor having inserted in the Sun newspaper (of which he was then chief proprietor) a sonnet to Lord Byron, in return for a present which his Lordship had sent him of a handsomely bound copy of all his works, there appeared in the same journal, on the following day (from the pen of some person who had acquired a control over the paper), a parody upon this sonnet, containing some disrespectful allusion to Lady Byron; and it is to this circumstance, which Mr. Taylor had written to explain, that the above letter, so creditable to the feelings of the noble husband, refers. [Mr. John Taylor, son of Chevalier Taylor, the oculist and autobiographer, was the author of a number of prologues, epilogues, and other light poetical pieces. His most popular effort was the humorous tale of Monsieur Tonson. He died in 1832.]

Corsair, which, you know, was published six months before his tragedy. It is from the storm in Conrad's cell. I have written to Mr. Sotheby to claim it; and, as Dennis roared out of the pit, 'By G—d, *that's my* thunder!' so do I, and will I, exclaim, 'By G—d that's *my lightning!*' that electrical fluid being, in fact, the subject of the said passage.

"You will have a print of Fanny Kelly, in the Maid, to prefix, which is honestly worth twice the money you have given for the MS. Pray what did you do with the note I gave you about Mungo Park?

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 227. TO MR. MOORE.

"13. Terrace, Piccadilly, October 28. 1815.

"You are, it seems, in England again, as I am to hear from every body but yourself; and I suppose you punctilious, because I did not answer your last Irish letter. When did you leave the 'swate country?' Never mind, I forgive you; — a strong proof of — I know not what — to give the lie to —

'He never pardons who hath done the wrong.'

"You have written to * *. You have also written to Perry, who intimates hope of an Opera from you. Coleridge has promised a tragedy. Now, if you keep Perry's word, and Coleridge keeps his own, Drury Lane will be set up; and, sooth to say, it is in grievous want of such a lift. We began at speed, and are blown already. When I say 'we,' I mean Kinnaird, who is the 'all in all sufficient,' and can count, which none of the rest of the Committee can.

"It is really very good fun, as far as the daily and nightly stir of these strutters and fretters go; and, if the concern could be brought to pay a shilling in the pound, would do much credit to the management. Mr. Sotheby, has an accepted tragedy, Ivan, whose first scene is in his sleep (I don't mean the author's). It was forwarded to us as a prodigious favourite of Kean's; but the said Kean, upon interrogation, denies his eulogy, and protests against his part. How it will end, I know not.

"I say so much about the theatre, because there is nothing else alive in London at this season. All the world are out of it, except us, who remain to lie in, — in December, or perhaps earlier. Lady B. is very ponderous and prosperous, apparently, and I wish it well over.

"There is a play before me from a personage who signs himself 'Hibernicus.' The hero is Malachi, the Irishman and king; and the villain and usurper, Turgesius, the Dane. The conclusion is fine. Turgesius is chained by the leg (*vide* stage direction) to a pillar on the stage; and King Malachi makes him a speech, not unlike Lord Castlereagh's about the balance of power and the lawfulness of legitimacy, which puts Turgesius into a frenzy — as Castlereagh's would, if his audience was chained by the leg. He draws a dagger and rushes at the orator; but, finding himself at the end of his tether, he sticks it into his own carcass, and dies, saying, he has fulfilled a prophecy.

"Now, this is *serious downright matter of fact*, and the gravest part of a tragedy which is not intended for burlesque. I tell it you for the honour of Ireland. The writer hopes it will be represented: — but what is Hope? nothing but the paint on the face of Existence; the least touch of Truth rubs it off, and then we see what a hollow-cheeked harlot we have got hold of. I am not sure that I have not said this last superfine reflection before. But never mind; — it will do for the tragedy of Turgesius, to which I can append it.

"Well, but how dost thou do? thou bard not of a thousand but three thousand! I wish your friend, Sir John Piano-forte[1], had kept that to himself, and not made it public at the trial of the song-seller in Dublin. I tell you why: it is a liberal thing for Longman to do, and honourable for you to obtain; but it will set all the 'hungry and dinnerless lank-jawed judges' upon the fortunate author. But they be d—d! — the 'Jeffrey and the Moore together are confident against the world in ink!' By the way, if poor Coleridge — who is a man of wonderful talent, and in distress[2], and about to publish two volumes of Poesy and Biography, and who has been worse used by the critics than ever we were — will you, if he comes out, promise me to review him favourably in the Edinburgh Review? Praise him I think you must, but you will also praise him *well*, — of all things the most difficult. It will be the making of him.

"This must be a secret between you and me, as Jeffrey might not like such a project; — nor, indeed, might C. himself like it. But I do think he only wants a pioneer and a sparkle or two to explode most gloriously. Ever yours most affectionately,

"B."

[1] [Sir John Stevenson, the eminent musical composer.]

[2] It is but justice both to "him that gave and him that took" to mention that the noble poet, at this time, with a delicacy which enhanced the kindness, advanced to the eminent person here spoken of, on the credit of some work he was about to produce, one hundred pounds.

"P S. — This is a sad scribbler's letter; but the next shall be 'more of this world.'"

As, after this letter, there occur but few allusions to his connection with the Drury Lane Management, I shall here avail myself of the opportunity to give some extracts from his "Detached Thoughts," containing recollections of his short acquaintance with the interior of the theatre.

"When I belonged to the Drury Lane Committee and was one of the Sub-Committee of Management, the number of *plays* upon the shelves were about *five* hundred. Conceiving that amongst these there must be *some* of merit, in person and by proxy I caused an investigation. I do not think that of those which I saw there was one which could be conscientiously tolerated. There never were such things as most of them! Mathurin was very kindly recommended to me by Walter Scott, to whom I had recourse, firstly, in the hope that he would do something for us himself[1]; and, secondly, in despair, that he would point out to us any young (or old) writer of promise. Mathurin sent his Bertram and a letter *without* his address, so that at first I could give him no answer. When I at last hit upon his residence, I sent him a favourable answer and something more substantial. His play succeeded; but I was at that time absent from England.

"I tried Coleridge too: but he had nothing feasible in hand at the time. Mr. Sotheby obligingly offered *all* his tregedies, and I pledged myself, and, notwithstanding many squabbles with my Committed Brethren, did get 'Ivan' accepted, read, and the parts distributed. But, lo! in the very heart of the matter, upon some *tepid*ness on the part of Kean, or warmth on that of the author, Sotheby withdrew his play. Sir James Bland Burgess did also present four tragedies and a farce, and I moved green-room and Sub-Committee, but they would not.

"Then the scenes I had to go through! — the authors, and the authoresses, and the milliners, and the wild Irishmen, — the people from Brighton, from Blackwall, from Chatham, from Cheltenham, from Dublin, from Dundee, — who came in upon me! to all of whom it was proper to give a civil answer, and a hearing, and a reading. Mrs. Glover's father, an Irish dancing-master of sixty years, calling upon me to request to play Archer, dressed in silk stockings on a frosty morning to show his legs (which were certainly good and Irish for his age, and had been still better,) — Miss Emma Somebody, with a play entitled 'The Bandit of Bohemia,' or some such title or production, — Mr. O'Higgins, then resident at Richmond, with an Irish tragedy, in which the unities could not fail to be observed, for the protagonist was chained by the leg to a pillar during the chief part of the performance. He was a wild man, of a salvage appearance, and the difficulty of *not* laughing at him was only to be got over by reflecting upon the probable consequences of such cachinnation.

"As I am really a civil and polite person, and *do* hate giving pain when it can be avoided, I sent them up to Douglas Kinnaird, — who is a man of business, and sufficiently ready with a negative, — and left them to settle with him; and as at the beginning of next year I went abroad, I have since been little aware of the progress of the theatres.

"Players are said to be an impracticable people. They are so; but I managed to steer clear of any disputes with them, and excepting one debate[2] with the elder Byrne about Miss Smith's *pas de* — (something — I forget the technicals,) — I do not remember any litigation of my own. I used to protect Miss Smith, because she was like Lady Jane Harley in the face, and likenesses go a great

[1] ["I remember declining to write for the stage, and alleging in excuse, not only the probability that I might not succeed, but the unpleasant yet necessary and inevitable subjection in which I must, as a dramatic writer, be necessarily kept by 'the good folks of the green-room.' *Cæteraque*, as I added, *ingenio non subcunda meo*." Byron sprang up and crossed the room with great vivacity, saying, 'No, by G—', nor by mine either!' I cannot but think he had been thinking of some dramatic attempt, and that my answer had touched his pride." — Walter Scott, MS.]

[2] A correspondent of one of the Monthly Miscellanies (Mr. James Smith) gives the following account of this incident: —

"During Lord Byron's administration, a ballet was invented by the elder Byrne, in which Miss Smith (since Mrs. Oscar Byrne) had a *pas seul*. This the lady wished to remove to a later period in the ballet. The ballet-master refused, and the lady swore she would not dance it at all. The music incidental to the dance began to play, and the lady walked off the stage. Both parties flounced into the green-room to lay the case before Lord Byron, who happened to be the only person in that apartment. The noble committee-man made an award in favour of Miss Smith, and both complainants rushed angrily out of the room at the instant of my entering it. 'If you had come a minute sooner,' said Lord Byron, 'you would have heard a curious matter decided on by me: a question of dancing! — by me,' added he, looking down at the lame limb, 'whom Nature from my birth has prohibited from taking a single step.' His countenance fell after he had uttered this, as if he had said too much; and for a moment there was an embarrassing silence on both sides."

way with me. Indeed, in general, I left such things to my more bustling colleagues, who used to reprove me seriously for not being able to take such things in hand without buffooning with the histrions, or throwing things into confusion by treating light matters with levity.

"Then the Committee! — then the Sub-Committee! — we were but few, but never agreed. There was Peter Moore who contradicted Kinnaird, and Kinnaird who contradicted every body: then our two managers, Rae and Dibdin; and our secretary, Ward! and yet we were all very zealous and in earnest to do good and so forth. George Lamb furnished us with prologues to our revived old English plays; but was not pleased with me for complimenting him as 'the Upton' of our theatre (Mr. Upton is or was the poet who writes the songs for Astley's), and almost gave up prologuing in consequence.

"In the pantomime of 1815–16 there was a representation of the masquerade of 1814, given by 'us youth' of Watier's Club to Wellington and Co. Douglas Kinnaird and one or two others, with myself, put on masks, and went on the stage with the οἱ πολλοι, to see the effect of a theatre from the stage: — it is very grand. Douglas danced among the figuranti too, and they were puzzled to find out who we were, as being more than their number. It was odd enough that Douglas Kinnaird and I should have been both at the *real* masquerade, and afterwards in the mimic one of the same, on the stage of Drury Lane theatre."

LETTER 228. TO MR. MOORE.

"Terrace, Piccadilly, October 31. 1815.

"I have not been able to ascertain precisely the time of duration of the stock market; but I believe it is a good time for selling out, and I hope so. First, because I shall see you; and, next, because I shall receive certain monies on behalf of Lady B., the which will materially conduce to my comfort, — I wanting (as the duns say) 'to make up a sum.'

"Yesterday, I dined out with a large-ish party, where were Sheridan and Colman, Harry Harris of Covent Garden, and his brother, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Douglas Kinnaird, and others, of note and notoriety. Like other parties of the kind, it was first silent, then talky, then argumentative, then disputatious, then unintelligible, then altogether, then inarticulate, and then drunk. When we had reached the last step of this glorious ladder, it was difficult to get down again without stumbling; and, to crown all, Kinnaird and I had to conduct Sheridan down a d—d corkscrew staircase, which had certainly been constructed before the discovery of fermented liquors, and to which no legs, however crooked, could possibly accommodate themselves. We deposited him safe at home, where his man, evidently used to the business, waited to receive him in the hall.

"Both he and Colman were, as usual, very good; but I carried away much wine, and the wine had previously carried away my memory; so that all was hiccup and happiness for the last hour or so, and I am not impregnated with any of the conversation. Perhaps you heard of a late answer of Sheridan to the watchman who found him bereft of that 'divine particle of air,' called reason, * * *. He, the watchman, who found Sherry in the street, fuddled and bewildered, and almost insensible. 'Who are *you*, sir?' — no answer. 'What's your name?' — a hiccup. 'What's your name?' — Answer, in a slow, deliberate, and impassive tone — 'Wilberforce!!!' Is not that Sherry all over? — and, to my mind, excellent. Poor fellow, *his* very dregs are better than the 'first sprightly runnings' of others.

"My paper is full, and I have a grievous head-ach.

"P. S.— Lady B. is in full progress. Next month will bring to light (with the aid of 'Juno Lucina, *fer opem*,' or rather *opes*, for the last are most wanted,) the tenth wonder of the world — Gil Blas being the eighth, and he (my son's father) the ninth."

LETTER 229. TO MR. MOORE.

"November 4. 1815.

"Had you not bewildered my head with the 'stocks,' your letter would have been answered directly. Hadn't I to go to the city? and hadn't I to remember what to ask when I got there? and hadn't I forgotten it?

"I should be undoubtedly delighted to see you; but I don't like to urge against your reasons my own inclinations. Come you must soon, for stay you *won't*. I know you of old; — you have been too much leavened with London to keep long out of it.

"Lewis is going to Jamaica to suck his sugar canes. He sails in two days; I inclose you his farewell note. I saw him last night at Drury Lane Theatre for the last time previous to his voyage. Poor fellow! he is really a good man — an excellent man — he left me his walking-stick and a pot of

preserved ginger. I shall never eat the last without tears in my eyes, it is so *hot*. We have had a devil of a row among our ballerinas. Miss Smith has been wronged about a hornpipe. The Committee have interfered; but Byrne, the d—d ballet-master, won't budge a step. *I* am furious, so is George Lamb. Kinnaird is very glad, because — he don't know why; and I am very sorry, for the same reason. To-day I dine with Kd. — we are to have Sheridan and Colman again; and to-morrow, once more, at Sir Gilbert Heathcote's.

"Leigh Hunt has written a *real good* and *very original Poem*, which I think will be a great hit. You can have no notion how very well it is written, nor should I, had I not redde it. As to us, Tom — eh, when art thou out? If you think the verses worth it, I would rather they were embalmed in the Irish Melodies, than scattered abroad in a separate song—much rather. But when are thy great things out? I mean the Po of Pos — thy Shah Nameh. It is very kind in Jeffrey to like the Hebrew Melodies.[1] Some of the fellows here preferred Sternhold and Hopkins, and said so; — 'the fiend receive their souls therefor!'

"I must go and dress for dinner. Poor dear Murat, what an end! You know, I suppose, that his white plume used to be a rallying point in battle, like Henry IV.'s. He refused a confessor and a bandage; so would neither suffer his soul or body to be bandaged.[2] You shall have more to-morrow or next day.

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 230. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 4. 1815.

"When you have been enabled to form an opinion on Mr. Coleridge's MS.[3] you will oblige me by returning it, as, in fact, I have no authority to let it out of my hands. I think most highly of it, and feel anxious that you should be the publisher; but if you are not, I do not despair of finding those who will.

"I have written to Mr. Leigh Hunt, stating your willingness to treat with him, which, when I saw you, I understood you to be. Terms and time, I leave to his pleasure and your discernment; but this I will say, that I think it the *safest* thing you ever engaged in. I speak to you as a man of business; were I to talk to you as a reader or a critic, I should say it was a very wonderful and beautiful performance, with just enough of fault to make its beauties more remarked and remarkable.

"And now to the last — my own, which I feel ashamed of after the others; — publish or not as you like, I don't care *one damn*. If *you* don't, no one else shall, and I never thought or dreamed of it, except as one in the collection. If it is worth being in the fourth volume, put it there and nowhere else; and if not, put it in the fire.

"Yours, "N."

CHAPTER XXV.

1815—1816.

INCREASED PECUNIARY EMBARRASSMENTS. — LETTERS TO MURRAY AND MOORE. — BIRTH OF AUGUSTA ADA BYRON. — SEPARATION. — ANECDOTES. — LETTERS TO MOORE, ROGERS, AND MURRAY. — PUBLIC OUTCRY. — NEWSPAPER ABUSE. — PUBLICATION OF THE SIEGE OF CORINTH — AND OF PARISINA.

THOSE embarrassments which, from a review of his affairs previous to the marriage, he had clearly foreseen would, before long, overtake him, were not slow in realising his worst omens. The increased expenses induced by his new mode of life, with but very little increase of means to meet them, — the long arrears of early pecuniary obligations, as well as the claims which had been, gradually, since then, accumulating, all pressed upon him now with collected force, and reduced him to some of the worst humiliations of poverty. He had been even driven, by the necessity of encountering such demands, to the trying expedient of parting with his books,—which circumstance coming to Mr. Murray's ears, that gentleman in-

[1] ["The Hebrew Melodies, though obviously inferior to Lord Byron's other works, display a skill in versification, which would have raised an inferior artist to the very summit of distinction." — *Edin. Rev.* vol. xxvii. p. 291.]

[2] ["And thou, too, of the snow-white plume!
Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb;
Better hadst thou still been leading
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
Than sold thyself to death and shame
For a meanly royal name." See *Works*, p. 561.]

Nourishing a wild idea of recovering his crown, Murat invaded the Neapolitan territory at the head of about two hundred men, was attacked by the country people, fought as he was wont, was made prisoner, tried by martial law, and condemned, October 13. 1815.]

[3] [Coleridge's "Zapolya, a Christmas Tale, in two parts," was published in 1817.]

stantly forwarded to him 1500*l.*, with an assurance that another sum of the same amount should be at his service in a few weeks; and that if such assistance should not be sufficient, Mr. Murray was most ready to dispose of the copyrights of all his past works for his use.

This very liberal offer Lord Byron acknowledged in the following letter: —

LETTER 231. TO MR. MURRAY.

"November 14. 1815.

"I return you your bills not accepted, but certainly not *unhonoured*. Your present offer is a favour which I would accept from you, if I accepted such from any man. Had such been my intention, I can assure you I would have asked you fairly, and as freely as you would give; and I cannot say more of my confidence or your conduct.

"The circumstances which induce me to part with my books, though sufficiently, are not *immediately*, pressing. I have made up my mind to them, and there's an end.

"Had I been disposed to trespass on your kindness in this way, it would have been before now; but I am not sorry to have an opportunity of declining it, as it sets my opinion of you, and indeed of human nature, in a different light from that in which I have been accustomed to consider it. "Believe me very truly, &c."

TO MR. MURRAY.

"December 25. 1815.

"I send some lines, written some time ago, and intended as an opening to 'The Siege of Corinth.' I had forgotten them, and am not sure that they had not better be left out now: — on that, you and your Synod can determine. "Yours, &c."

The following are the lines alluded to in this note. They are written in the loosest form of that rambling style of metre which his admiration of Mr. Coleridge's "Christabel" led him, at this time, to adopt; and he judged rightly, perhaps, in omitting them as the opening of his poem. They are, however, too full of spirit and character to be lost. Though breathing the thick atmosphere of Piccadilly when he wrote them, it is plain that his fancy was far away, among the sunny hills and vales of Greece; and their contrast with the tame life he was leading at the moment, but gave to his recollections a fresher spring and force.

"In the year since Jesus died for men,
Eighteen hundred years and ten,
We were a gallant company,
Riding o'er land, and sailing o'er sea.
Oh! but we went merrily!
We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,
Never our steeds for a day stood still;
Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,
Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed;
Whether we couch'd in our rough capote,
On the rougher plank of our gliding boat,
Or stretch'd on the beach, or our saddles spread
As a pillow beneath the resting head,
Fresh we woke upon the morrow:
All our thoughts and words had scope,
We had health, and we had hope,
Toil and travel, but no sorrow.
We were of all tongues and creeds; —
Some were those who counted beads,
Some of mosque, and some of church,
And some, or I mis-say, of neither;
Yet through the wide world might ye search
Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

"But some are dead, and some are gone,
And some are scatter'd and alone,
And some are rebels on the hills [1]
That look along Epirus' valleys
Where Freedom still at moments rallies,
And pays in blood Oppression's ills:
And some are in a far countree,
And some all restlessly at home;
But never more, oh! never, we
Shall meet to revel and to roam.
But those hardy days flew cheerily;
And when they now fall drearily,
My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main
And bear my spirit back again
Over the earth, and through the air,
A wild bird, and a wanderer.
'Tis this that ever wakes my strain,
And oft, too oft, implores again
The few who may endure my lay,
To follow me so far away.

"Stranger — wilt thou follow now,
And sit with me on Acro-Corinth's brow?"

LETTER 232. TO MR. MOORE.

"January 5. 1816.

"I hope Mrs. M. is quite re-established. The little girl was born on the 10th of December last; her name is Augusta *Ada* (the second a very antique family name, — I believe not used since the reign of King John). She was, and is, very flourishing and fat, and reckoned very large for her days — squalls and sucks incessantly. Are you answered? Her mother is doing very well, and up again.

"I have now been married a year on the second of this month — heigh-ho! I have seen nobody lately much worth noting, except Sebastiani and another general of the Gauls, once or twice at dinners out of doors.

[1] "The last tidings recently heard of Dervish (one of the Arnaouts who followed me) state him to be in revolt upon the mountains, at the head of some of the bands common in that country in times of trouble."

Sebastiani[1] is a fine, foreign, villanous-looking, intelligent, and very agreeable man; his compatriot[2] is more of the *petit-maître* and younger, but I should think not at all of the same intellectual calibre with the Corsican — which Sebastiani, you know, is, and a cousin of Napoleon's.

"Are you never to be expected in town again? To be sure, there is no one here of the fifteen hundred fillers of hot rooms, called the fashionable world. My approaching papa-ship detained us for advice, &c. &c. though I would as soon be here as any where else on this side of the Straits of Gibraltar.

"I would gladly — or, rather, sorrowfully — comply with your request of a dirge for the poor girl you mention.[3] But how can I write on one I have never seen or known? Besides, you will do it much better yourself. I could not write upon any thing, without some personal experience and foundation; far less on a theme so peculiar. Now, you have both in this case; and, if you had neither, you have more imagination, and would never fail.

"This is but a dull scrawl, and I am but a dull fellow. Just at present, I am absorbed in 500 contradictory contemplations, though with but one object in view — which will probably end in nothing, as most things we wish do. But never mind, — as somebody says, 'for the blue sky bends over all.' I only could be glad, if it bent over me where it is a little bluer; like the 'skyish top of blue Olympus,' which, by the way, looked very white when I last saw. "Ever, &c."

On reading over the foregoing letter, I was much struck by the tone of melancholy that pervaded it; and well knowing it to be the habit of the writer's mind to seek relief, when under the pressure of any disquiet or disgust, in that sense of freedom which told him that there were homes for him elsewhere, I could perceive, I thought, in his recollections of the "blue Olympus," some return of the restless and roving spirit, which unhappiness or impatience always called up in his mind. I had, indeed, at the time when he sent me those melancholy verses, "There's not a joy this world can give," &c. felt some vague apprehensions as to the mood into which his spirits then seemed to be sinking, and, in acknowledging the receipt of the verses, thus tried to banter him out of it: — "But why thus on your stool of melancholy again, Master Stephen? — This will never do — it plays the deuce with all the matter-of-fact duties of life, and you must bid adieu to it. Youth is the only time when one can be melancholy with impunity. As life itself grows sad and serious we have nothing for it but — to be as much as possible the contrary."

My absence from London during the whole of this year had deprived me of all opportunities of judging for myself how far the appearances of his domestic state gave promise of happiness; nor had any rumours reached me which at all inclined me to suspect that the course of his married life hitherto exhibited less smoothness than such unions, — on the surface, at least, — generally wear. The strong and affectionate terms in which, soon after the marriage, he had, in some of the letters I have given, declared his own happiness — a declaration which his known frankness left me no room to question — had, in no small degree, tended to still those apprehensions which my first view of the lot he had chosen for himself awakened. I could not, however, but observe that these indications of a contented heart soon ceased. His mention of the partner of his home became more rare and formal, and there was observable, I thought, through some of his letters, a feeling of unquiet and weariness that brought back all those gloomy anticipations with which I had, from the first, regarded his fate. This last letter of his, in particular, struck me as full of sad omen, and, in the course of my answer, I thus noticed to him the impression it had made on me — "And so you are a whole year married! —

> 'It was last year I vow'd to thee
> That fond impossibility.'

Do you know, my dear B., there was a something in your last letter — a sort of unquiet mystery, as well as a want of your usual elasticity of spirit — which has hung upon my mind unpleasantly ever since. I long to be near you, that I might know how you really look and feel; for these letters tell nothing, and one word, *a quattr'occhi*, is worth whole reams of correspondence. But only *do* tell me you are happier than that letter has led me to fear, and I shall be satisfied."

It was in a few weeks after this latter

[1] [Count Sebastiani, now the ambassador from the court of Louis Philippe to the court of London. 1838.]

[2] [Count Flahaut — who, in June 1817, married the Hon. Margaret Mercer Elphinstone; now Baroness Keith. 1838.]

[3] I had mentioned to him, as a subject worthy of his best powers of pathos, a melancholy event which had just occurred in my neighbourhood, and to which I have myself made allusion in one of the Sacred Melodies — "Weep not for her."

communication between us that Lady Byron adopted the resolution of parting from him. She had left London about the middle of January, on a visit to her father's house in Leicestershire, and Lord Byron was, in a short time after, to follow her. They had parted in the utmost kindness, — she wrote him a letter, full of playfulness and affection, on the road, and, immediately on her arrival at Kirkby Mallory, her father wrote to acquaint Lord Byron that she would return to him no more. At the time when he had to stand this unexpected shock, his pecuniary embarrassments, which had been fast gathering around him during the whole of the last year (there having been no less than eight or nine executions in his house within that period), had arrived at their utmost; and at a moment when, to use his own strong expressions, he was "standing alone on his hearth, with his household gods shivered around him," he was also doomed to receive the startling intelligence that the wife who had just parted with him in kindness, had parted with him — for ever. [1]

About this time the following note was written: —

TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 8. 1816.

"Do not mistake me — I really returned your book for the reason assigned, and no other. It is too good for so careless a fellow. I have parted with all my own books, and positively won't deprive you of so valuable 'a drop of that immortal man.'

"I shall be very glad to see you, if you like to call, though I am at present contending with 'the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,' some of which have struck at me from a quarter whence I did not indeed expect them. — But, no matter, 'there is a world elsewhere,' and I will cut my way through this as I can.

"If you write to Moore, will you tell him that I shall answer his letter the moment I can muster time and spirits?

"Ever yours,

"Bn."

The rumours of the separation did not reach me till more than a week afterwards, when I immediately wrote to him thus: — "I am most anxious to hear from you, though I doubt whether I ought to mention the subject on which I am so anxious. If, however, what I heard last night, in a letter from town, be true, you will know immediately what I allude to, and just communicate as much or as little upon the subject as you think proper; — only *something* I should like to know, as soon as possible, from yourself, in order to set my mind at rest with respect to the truth or falsehood of the report." The following is his answer: —

LETTER 233. TO MR. MOORE.

"February 29. 1816.

"I have not answered your letter for a time; and, at present, the reply to part of it might extend to such a length, that I shall delay it till it can be made in person, and then I will shorten it as much as I can.

"In the mean time, I am at war 'with all the world and his wife;' or rather, 'all the world and *my* wife' are at war with me, and have not yet crushed me, — whatever they *may* do. I don't know that in the course of a hair-breadth existence I was ever, at home or abroad, in a situation so completely uprooting of present pleasure, or rational hope for the future, as this same. I say this, because I think so, and feel it. But I shall not sink under it the more for that mode of considering the question — I have made up my mind.

"By the way, however, you must not believe all you hear on the subject; and don't attempt to defend me. If you succeeded in that, it would be a mortal, or an immortal, offence — who can bear refutation? I have but a very short answer for those whom it concerns; and all the activity of myself and some vigorous friends have not yet fixed on any tangible ground or personage, on which or with whom I can discuss matters, in a summary way, with a fair pretext; — though I nearly had *nailed one* yesterday, but he evaded by — what was judged by others — a satisfactory explanation. I speak of *circulators* — against whom I have no enmity, though I must act according to the common code of usage, when I hit upon those of the serious order.

"Now for other matters — poesy, for in-

[1] ["Feb. 7th. Heard with sorrow, and a sort of shame, though not with surprise, that Lady ——— has quitted, or is about to quit, her husband. — 8th. Went into Murray's. He gave me Lord Byron's two Tales. Before dressing, read the 'Siege of Corinth,' the first of them. Another Corsair is the hero; and there is so much of a general resemblance to the former poem, that I was once or twice uncertain whether I had not read the verses before. The conclusion is very fine, and so is the apparition of Francesca. In Parisina there is great energy in two descriptions; one of lawless love, the other of violent death."—Sir J. Mackintosh: *Life*, vol. ii. p. 332.]

stance. Leigh Hunt's poem is a devilish good one — quaint, here and there, but with the substratum of originality, and with poetry about it, that will stand the test. I do not say this because he has inscribed it to me[1], which I am sorry for, as I should otherwise have begged you to review it in the Edinburgh.[2] It is really deserving of much praise, and a favourable critique in the E. R. would but do it justice, and set it up before the public eye, where it ought to be.

"How are you? and where? I have not the most distant idea what I am going to do myself — or with myself — or where — or what. I had a few weeks ago, some things to say that would have made you laugh; but they tell me now that I must not laugh, and so I have been very serious — and am.

"I have not been very well — with a *liver* complaint — but am much better within the last fortnight, though still under Iatrical advice. I have latterly seen a little of * *.

"I must go and dress to dine. My little girl is in the country, and, they tell me, is a very fine child, and now nearly three months old. Lady Noel (my mother-in-law, or, rather, *at* law) is at present overlooking it. Her daughter (Miss Milbanke that was) is, I believe, in London with her father. A Mrs. C. (now a kind of housekeeper and spy of Lady N.'s), who, in her better days, was a washerwoman, is supposed to be — by the learned — very much the occult cause of our late domestic discrepancies.

"In all this business, I am the sorriest for Sir Ralph. He and I are equally punished, though *magis pares quam similes* in our affliction. Yet it is hard for both to suffer for the fault of one, and so it is — I shall be separated from my wife; he will retain his. "Ever, &c."

In my reply to this letter, written a few days after, there is a passage which (though containing an opinion it might have been more prudent, perhaps, to conceal) I feel myself called upon to extract on account of the singularly generous avowal, — honourable alike to both the parties in this unhappy affair, — which it was the means of drawing from Lord Byron. The following are my words: — "I am much in the same state as yourself with respect to the subject of your letter, my mind being so full of things which I don't know how to write about, that *I* too must defer the greater part of them till we meet in May, when I shall put you fairly on your trial for all crimes and misdemeanors. In the mean time, you will not be at a loss for judges, nor executioners either, if they could have their will. The world, in their generous ardour to take what they call the weaker side, soon contrive to make it most formidably the strongest. Most sincerely do I grieve at what has happened. It has upset all my wishes and theories as to the influence of marriage on your life; for, instead of bringing you, as I expected, into something like a regular orbit, it has only cast you off again into infinite space, and left you, I fear, in a far worse state than it found you. As to defending you, the only person with whom I have yet attempted this task is myself; and, considering the little I know upon the subject, (or rather, perhaps, *owing* to this cause,) I have hitherto done it with very tolerable success. After all, your *choice* was the misfortune. I never liked, — but I'm here wandering into the απορρητα, and so must change the subject for a far pleasanter one, your last new poems, which," &c. &c.

The return of post brought me the following answer, which, while it raises our admiration of the generous candour of the writer, but adds to the sadness and strangeness of the whole transaction.

LETTER 234. TO MR. MOORE.

"March 8. 1816.

"I rejoice in your promotion as Chairman and Charitable Steward, &c. &c. These be dignities which await only the virtuous. But then, recollect you are *six* and *thirty*, (I speak this enviously — not of your age, but the 'honour — love — obedience — troops of friends,' which accompany it,) and I have eight years good to run before I arrive at such hoary perfection; by which time, — if I *am* at all[3], — it will probably be in a state of grace or progressing merits.

[1] [Speaking of this dedication, the Quarterly Reviewers say, "We never, in so few lines, saw so many clear marks of the vulgar impatience of a low man, conscious and ashamed of his wretched vanity, and labouring, with coarse flippancy, to scramble over the bounds of birth and education, and fidget himself into the *stout-heartedness* of being familiar with a LORD." — Vol. xiv. p. 481.]

[2] My reply to this part of his letter was, I find, as follows: — "With respect to Hunt's poem, though it is, I own, full of beauties, and though I like himself sincerely, I really could not undertake to praise it *seriously*. There is so much of the *quizzible* in all he writes, that I never can put on the proper pathetic face in reading him."

[3] This sad doubt, — "if I *am* at all," — becomes no less singular than sad when we recollect that six and thirty was actually the age when he ceased to "be," and at a moment, too, when (as even the least friendly to him allow) he was in that state of "progressing merits" which he here jestingly anticipates.

"I must set you right in one point, however. The fault was *not* — no, nor even the misfortune — in my 'choice' (unless in *choosing at all*) — for I do not believe — and I must say it, in the very dregs of all this bitter business — that there ever was a better, or even a brighter, a kinder, or a more amiable and agreeable being than Lady B. I never had, nor can have, any reproach to make her, while with me. Where there is blame, it belongs to myself, and, if I cannot redeem, I must bear it.

"Her nearest relatives are a * * * * — my circumstances have been and are in a state of great confusion — my health has been a good deal disordered, and my mind ill at ease for a considerable period. Such are the causes (I do not name them as excuses) which have frequently driven me into excess, and disqualified my temper for comfort. Something also may be attributed to the strange and desultory habits which, becoming my own master at an early age, and scrambling about, over and through the world, may have induced. I still, however, think that, if I had a fair chance, by being placed in even a tolerable situation, I might have gone on fairly. But that seems hopeless, — and there is nothing more to be said. At present — except my health, which is better (it is odd, but agitation or contest of any kind gives a rebound to my spirits and sets me up for the time) — I have to battle with all kinds of unpleasantnesses, including private and pecuniary difficulties, &c. &c.

"I believe I may have said this before to you, but I risk repeating it. It is nothing to bear the *privations* of adversity, or, more properly, ill fortune; but my pride recoils from its *indignities*. However, I have no quarrel with that same pride, which will, I think, buckler me through every thing. If my heart could have been broken, it would have been so years ago, and by events more afflicting than these.

"I agree with you (to turn from this topic to our shop), that I have written too much. The last things were, however, published very reluctantly by me, and for reasons I will explain when we meet. I know not why I have dwelt so much on the same scenes, except that I find them fading, or *confusing* (if such a word may be) in my memory, in the midst of present turbulence and pressure, and I felt anxious to stamp before the die was worn out. I now break it. With those countries, and events connected with them, all my really poetical feelings begin and end. Were I to try, I could make nothing of any other subject, and that I have apparently exhausted. 'Wo to him,' says Voltaire, 'who says all he could say on any subject.' There are some on which, perhaps, I could have said still more: but I leave them all, and too soon.

"Do you remember the lines I sent you early last year, which you still have? I don't wish (like Mr. Fitzgerald, in the Morning Post) to claim the character of 'Vates' in all its translations, but were they not a little prophetic? I mean those beginning, 'There's not a joy the world can,' &c. &c., on which I rather pique myself as being the truest, though the most melancholy, I ever wrote.

"What a scrawl have I sent you! You say nothing of yourself, except that you are a Lancasterian churchwarden, and an encourager of mendicants. When are you out? and how is your family? My child is very well and flourishing, I hear; but I must see also. I feel no disposition to resign it to the contagion of its grandmother's society, though I am unwilling to take it from the mother. It is weaned, however, and something about it must be decided. Ever, &c."

Having already gone so far in laying open to my readers some of the sentiments which I entertained, respecting Lord Byron's marriage, at a time when, little foreseeing that I should ever become his biographer, I was, of course, uninfluenced by the peculiar bias supposed to belong to that task, it may still further, perhaps, be permitted me to extract from my reply to the foregoing letter some sentences of explanation which its contents seemed to me to require.

"I had certainly no right to say any thing about the unluckiness of your choice, though I rejoice now that I did, as it has drawn from you a tribute which, however unaccountable and mysterious it renders the whole affair, is highly honourable to both parties. What I meant in hinting a doubt with respect to the object of your selection did not imply the least impeachment of that perfect amiableness which the world, I find, by common consent, allows to her. I only feared that she might have been too perfect — too *precisely* excellent — too matter-of-fact a paragon for you to coalesce with comfortably; and that a person whose perfection hung in more easy folds about her, whose brightness was softened down by some of "those fair defects which best conciliate love," would, by appealing more dependently to your protection, have stood a much better chance with your good nature. All these suppositions, however, I have been led into

by my intense anxiety to acquit you of any thing like a capricious abandonment of such a woman[1]; and, totally in the dark as I am with respect to all but the fact of your separation, you cannot conceive the solicitude, the fearful solicitude, with which I look forward to a history of the transaction from your own lips when we meet, — a history in which I am sure of, at least, *one* virtue — manly candour."

With respect to the causes that may be supposed to have led to this separation, it seems needless, with the characters of both parties before our eyes, to go in quest of any very remote or mysterious reasons to account for it. I have already, in some observations on the general character of men of genius, endeavoured to point out those peculiarities, both in disposition and habitudes, by which, in the far greater number of instances, they have been found unfitted for domestic happiness. Of these defects, (which are, as it were, the shadow that genius casts, and too generally, it is to be feared, in proportion to its stature,) Lord Byron could not, of course, fail to have inherited his share, in common with all the painfully-gifted class to which he belonged. How thoroughly, with respect to one attribute of this temperament which he possessed, — one, that "sicklies o'er" the face of happiness itself, — he was understood by the person most interested in observing him, will appear from the following anecdote, as related by himself.[2]

"People have wondered at the melancholy which runs through my writings. Others have wondered at my personal gaiety. But I recollect once, after an hour in which I had been sincerely and particularly gay and rather brilliant, in company, my wife replying to me when I said (upon her remarking my high spirits), 'And yet, Bell, I have been called and miscalled melancholy — you must have seen how falsely, frequently?' — 'No, Byron,' she answered, 'it is not so: at heart you are the most melancholy of mankind; and often when apparently gayest.'"[3]

To these faults and sources of faults, inherent in his own sensitive nature, he added also many of those which a long indulgence of self-will generates, — the least compatible of all others, (if not softened down, as they were in him, by good nature,) with that system of mutual concession and sacrifice by which the balance of domestic peace is maintained. When we look back, indeed, to the unbridled career, of which this marriage was meant to be the goal, — to the rapid and restless course in which his life had run along, like a burning train, through a series of wanderings, adventures, successes, and passions, the fever of all which was still upon him, when, with the same headlong recklessness, he rushed into this marriage, — it can but little surprise us that, in the space of one short year, he should not have been able to recover all at once from his bewilderment, or to settle down into that tame level of conduct which the close observers of his every action required. As well might it be expected that a steed like his own Mazeppa's,

> "Wild as the wild deer and untaught,
> With spur and bridle undefiled —
> 'Twas but a day he had been caught,"

should stand still, when reined, without chafing or champing the bit.

Even had the new condition of life into which he passed been one of prosperity and smoothness, some time, as well as tolerance, must still have been allowed for the subsiding of so excited a spirit into rest. But, on the contrary, his marriage (from the reputation, no doubt, of the lady, as an heiress,) was, at once, a signal for all the arrears and claims of a long-accumulating state of embarrassment to explode upon him; — his door was almost daily beset by duns, and his house nine times during that year in possession of bailiffs[4]; while, in addition to these anxie-

[1] It will be perceived from this that I was as yet unacquainted with the true circumstances of the transaction.

[2] MS. — "Detached Thoughts."

[3] ["The flashes of mirth, gaiety, indignation, or satirical dislike, which frequently animated Lord Byron's countenance, might, during an evening's conversation, be mistaken by a stranger for its habitual expression, so easily and so happily was it formed for them all; but those who had an opportunity of studying his features for a length of time, and upon various occasions, both of rest and emotion, will agree with us, that their proper language was that of melancholy." — Sir Walter Scott: *Prose Works*, vol. iv. p. 359.]

[4] An anecdote connected with one of these occasions is thus related in the Journal just referred to: —

"When the bailiff (for I have seen most kinds of life) came upon me in 1815 to seize my chattels, (being a peer of parliament, my person was beyond him,) being curious (as is my habit), I first asked him, 'what extents elsewhere he had for government?' upon which he showed me one upon *one house only* for *seventy thousand pounds!* Next I asked him if he had nothing for Sheridan? 'Oh — Sheridan!' said he: 'ay, I have this' (pulling out a pocket-book, &c.); 'but, my Lord, I have been in Sheridan's house a twelvemonth at a time — a civil gentleman — knows how to deal with *us*,' &c. &c. &c. Our own business was then discussed, which was none of the easiest for me at that time. But the man was civil, and (what I valued more) communicative. I had met many of his brethren, years before, in affairs of my friends, (commoners, that is,) but this was the first (or second) on my own account. — A civil man; fee'd accordingly; probably he anticipated as much."

ties and — what he felt still more — indignities of poverty, he had also the pain of fancying, whether rightly or wrongly, that the eyes of enemies and spies were upon him, even under his own roof, and that his every hasty word and look were interpreted in the most perverting light.

As, from the state of their means, his lady and he saw but little society, his only relief from the thoughts which a life of such embarrassment brought with it was in those avocations which his duty, as a member of the Drury Lane Committee, imposed upon him. And here, — in this most unlucky connexion with the theatre, — one of the fatalities of his short year of trial, as husband, lay. From the reputation which he had previously acquired for gallantries, and the sort of reckless and boyish levity to which — often in very "bitterness of soul" — he gave way, it was not difficult to bring suspicion upon some of those acquaintances which his frequent intercourse with the green-room induced him to form, or even (as, in one instance, was the case) to connect with his name injuriously that of a person to whom he had scarcely ever addressed a single word.

Notwithstanding, however, this ill-starred concurrence of circumstances, which might have palliated any excesses either of temper or conduct into which they drove him, it was, after all, I am persuaded, to no such serious causes that the unfortunate alienation, which so soon ended in disunion, is to be traced. "In all the marriages I have ever seen," says Steele, "most of which have been unhappy ones, the great cause of evil has proceeded from slight occasions;" and to this remark, I think, the marriage under our consideration would not be found, upon enquiry, to be an exception. Lord Byron himself, indeed, when at Cephalonia, a short time before his death, seems to have expressed, in a few words, the whole pith of the mystery. An English gentleman with whom he was conversing on the subject of Lady Byron, having ventured to enumerate to him the various causes he had heard alleged for the separation, the noble poet, who had seemed much amused with their absurdity and falsehood, said, after listening to them all, — "The causes, my dear sir, were too simple to be easily found out."

In truth, the circumstances, so unexampled, that attended their separation, — the last words of the parting wife to the husband being those of the most playful affection, while the language of the deserted husband towards the wife was in a strain, as the world knows, of tenderest eulogy, — are in themselves a sufficient proof that, at the time of their parting, there could have been no very deep sense of injury on either side. It was not till afterwards that, in both bosoms, the repulsive force came into operation, — when, to the party which had taken the first decisive step in the strife, it became naturally a point of pride to persevere in it with dignity, and this unbendingness provoked, as naturally, in the haughty spirit of the other, a strong feeling of resentment, which overflowed, at last, in acrimony and scorn. If there be any truth, however, in the principle, that they "never pardon who have done the wrong," Lord Byron, who was, to the last, disposed to reconciliation, proved so far, at least, his conscience to have been unhaunted by any very disturbing consciousness of aggression.

But though it would have been difficult, perhaps, for the victims of this strife, themselves, to have pointed out any single, or definite, cause for their disunion, — beyond that general incompatibility which is the canker of all such marriages, — the public, which seldom allows itself to be at a fault on these occasions, was, as usual, ready with an ample supply of reasons for the breach, — all tending to blacken the already darkly painted character of the poet, and representing him, in short, as a finished monster of cruelty and depravity. The reputation of the object of his choice for every possible virtue, (a reputation which had been, I doubt not, one of his own chief incentives to the marriage, from the vanity, reprobate as he knew he was deemed, of being able to win such a paragon,) was now turned against him by his assailants, not only in the way of contrast with his own character, but as if the excellences of the wife were proof positive of every enormity they chose to charge upon the husband.

Meanwhile, the unmoved silence of the lady herself, (from motives, it is but fair to suppose, of generosity and delicacy,) under the repeated demands made for a specification of her charges against him, left to malice and imagination the fullest range for their combined industry. It was accordingly stated, and almost universally believed, that the noble lord's second proposal to Miss Milbanke had been but with a view to revenge himself for the slight inflicted by her refusal of the first, and that he himself had confessed so much to her on their way from church. At the time when, as the reader has seen from his own honey-moon letters, he was, with all the good will in the world, imagining himself into happiness, and even boasting, in the pride of his fancy, that if

marriage were to be upon *lease*, he would glady renew his own for a term of ninety-nine years, — at this very time, according to these veracious chroniclers, he was employed in darkly following up the aforesaid scheme of revenge, and tormenting his lady by all sorts of unmanly cruelties, — such as firing off pistols to frighten her as she lay in bed [1], and other such freaks.

To the falsehoods concerning his green-room intimacies, and particularly with respect to one beautiful actress, with whom, in reality, he had hardly ever exchanged a single word, I have already adverted; and the extreme confidence with which this tale was circulated and believed affords no unfair specimen of the sort of evidence with which the public, in all such fits of moral wrath, is satisfied. It is, at the same time, very far from my intention to allege that, in the course of the noble poet's intercourse with the theatre, he was not sometimes led into a line of acquaintance and converse unbefitting, if not dangerous to, the steadiness of married life. But the imputations against him on this head were (as far as affected his conjugal character) not the less unfounded, — as the sole case in which he afforded any thing like *real* grounds for such an accusation did not take place till *after* the period of the separation.

Not content with such ordinary and tangible charges, the tongue of rumour was emboldened to proceed still further; and, presuming upon the mysterious silence maintained by one of the parties, ventured to throw out dark hints and vague insinuations, of which the fancy of every hearer was left to fill up the outline as he pleased. In consequence of all this exaggeration, such an outcry was now raised against Lord Byron as, in no case of private life, perhaps, was ever before witnessed; nor had the whole amount of fame which he had gathered, in the course of the last four years, much exceeded in proportion the reproach and obloquy that were now, within the space of a few weeks, showered upon him. In addition to the many who, no doubt, conscientiously believed and reprobated what they had but too much right, whether viewing him as poet or man of fashion, to consider credible excesses, there were also actively on the alert that large class of persons who seem to hold violence against the vices of others to be equivalent to virtue in themselves, together with all those natural haters of success who, having long sickened under the splendour of the *poet*, were now enabled, in the guise of champions for innocence, to wreak their spite on the *man*. In every various form of paragraph, pamphlet, and caricature, both his character and person were held up to odium [2]; — hardly a voice was raised, or at least listened to, in his behalf; and though a few faithful friends remained unshaken by his side, the utter hopelessness of stemming the torrent was felt as well by them as by himself, and, after an effort or two to gain a fair hearing, they submitted in silence. Among the few attempts made by himself towards confuting his calumniators was an appeal (such as the following short letter contains) to some of those persons with whom he had been in the habit of living familiarly.

LETTER 235. TO MR. ROGERS.

"March 25. 1816.

"You are one of the few persons with whom I have lived in what is called intimacy, and have heard me at times con-

[1] For this story, however, there was so far a foundation, that the practice to which he had accustomed himself from boyhood, of having loaded pistols always near him at night, was considered so strange a propensity as to be included in that list of symptoms (sixteen, I believe, in number), which were submitted to medical opinion, in proof of his insanity. Another symptom was the emotion, almost to hysterics, which he had exhibited on seeing Kean act Sir Giles Overreach. But the most plausible of all the grounds, as he himself used to allow, on which these articles of impeachment against his sanity were drawn up, was an act of violence committed by him on a favourite old watch that had been his companion from boyhood, and had gone with him to Greece. In a fit of vexation and rage, brought on by some of those humiliating embarrassments to which he was now almost daily a prey, he furiously dashed this watch upon the hearth, and ground it to pieces among the ashes with the poker.

[2] Of the abuse lavished upon him, the following extract from a poem, published at this time, will give some idea: —

"From native England, that endured too long
The ceaseless burden of his impious song;
His mad career of crimes and follies run,
And grey in vice, when life was scarce begun;
He goes, in foreign lands prepared to find
A life more suited to his guilty mind:
Where other climes new pleasures may supply
For that pall'd taste, and that unhallow'd eye;—
Wisely he seeks some yet untrodden shore,
For those who know him less may prize him more."

In a rhyming pamphlet, too, entitled, "A Poetical Epistle from Delia, addressed to Lord Byron," the writer thus charitably expresses herself: —

"Hopeless of peace below, and, shuddering thought!
Far from that Heaven, denied, if never sought,
Thy light a beacon — a reproach thy name —
Thy memory 'damn'd to everlasting fame,'
Shunn'd by the wise, admired by fools alone —
The good shall mourn thee — and the Muse disown."

versing on the untoward topic of my recent family disquietudes. Will you have the goodness to say to me at once, whether you ever heard me speak of her with disrespect, with unkindness, or defending myself at *her* expense by any serious imputation of any description against *her*? Did you never hear me say 'that when there was a right or a wrong, she had the *right*? — The reason I put these questions to you or others of my friends is, because I am said, by her and hers, to have resorted to such means of exculpation.

"Ever very truly yours,

"B"

In those Memoirs (or, more properly, Memoranda) of the noble poet, which it was thought expedient, for various reasons, to sacrifice, he gave a detailed account of all the circumstances connected with his marriage, from the first proposal to the lady till his own departure, after the breach, from England. In truth, though the title of "Memoirs," which he himself sometimes gave to that manuscript, conveys the idea of a complete and regular piece of biography, it was to this particular portion of his life that the work was principally devoted; while the anecdotes, having reference to other parts of his career, not only occupied a very disproportionate space in its pages, but were most of them such as are found repeated in the various Journals and other MSS. he left behind. The chief charm, indeed, of that narrative, was the melancholy playfulness — melancholy, from the wounded feeling so visible through its pleasantry — with which events unimportant and persons uninteresting, in almost every respect but their connection with such a man's destiny, were detailed and described in it. Frank, as usual, throughout, in his avowal of his own errors, and generously just towards her who was his fellow-sufferer in the strife, the impression his recital left on the minds of all who perused it was, to say the least, favourable to him; — though, upon the whole, leading to a persuasion, which I have already intimated to be my own, that, neither in kind nor degree, did the causes of disunion between the parties much differ from those that loosen the links of most such marriages.

With respect to the details themselves, though all-important in his own eyes at the time, as being connected with the subject that superseded most others in his thoughts, the interest they would possess for others, now that their first zest as a subject of scandal is gone by, and the greater number of the persons to whom they relate forgotten, would be too slight to justify me in entering upon them more particularly, or running the risk of any offence that might be inflicted by their disclosure. As far as the character of the illustrious subject of these pages is concerned, I feel that Time and Justice are doing far more in its favour than could be effected by any such gossiping details. During the lifetime of a man of genius, the world is but too much inclined to judge of him rather by what he wants than by what he possesses, and even where conscious, as in the present case, that his defects are among the sources of his greatness, to require of him unreasonably the one without the other. If Pope had not been splenetic and irritable, we should have wanted his Satires; and an impetuous temperament, and passions untamed, were indispensable to the conformation of a poet like Byron. It is by posterity only that full justice is rendered to those who have paid such hard penalties to reach it. The dross that had once hung about the ore drops away, and the infirmities, and even miseries, of genius are forgotten in its greatness. Who now asks whether Dante was right or wrong in his matrimonial differences? or by how many of those whose fancies dwell fondly on his Beatrice is even the name of his Gemma Donati remembered?

Already, short as has been the interval since Lord Byron's death, the charitable influence of time in softening, if not rescinding, the harsh judgments of the world against genius is visible. The utter unreasonableness of trying such a character by ordinary standards, or of expecting to find the materials of order and happiness in a bosom constantly heaving forth from its depths such "lava floods," is — now that his spirit has passed from among us — felt and acknowledged. In reviewing the circumstances of his marriage, a more even scale of justice is held; and while every tribute of sympathy and commiseration is accorded to her, who, unluckily for her own peace, became inolved in such a destiny, — who, with virtues and attainments that would have made the home of a more ordinary man happy, undertook, in evil hour, to "turn and wind a fiery Pegasus," and but failed where it may be doubted whether even the fittest for such a task would have succeeded, — full allowance is, at the same time, made for the great martyr of genius himself, whom so many other causes, beside that restless fire within him, concurred to unsettle in mind and (as as he himself feelingly expresses it) "disqualify for comfort;" —

whose doom it was to be either thus or less great, and whom to have tamed might have been to extinguish; there, never, perhaps, having existed an individual to whom, whether as author or man, the following line was more applicable: —

"Si non errâsset, fecerat ille minus." [1]

While these events were going on, — events of which his memory and heart bore painfully the traces through the remainder of his short life, — some occurrences took place, connected with his literary history, to which it is a relief to divert the attention of the reader from the distressing subject that has now so long detained us.

The letter that follows was in answer to one received from Mr. Murray, in which that gentleman had inclosed him a draft for a thousand guineas for the copyright of his two poems, The Siege of Corinth and Parisina: —

LETTER 236. TO MR. MURRAY.

"January 3. 1816.

"Your offer is *liberal* in the extreme, (you see I use the word *to* you and *of* you, though I would not consent to your using it of yourself to Mr. Dallas,) and much more than the two poems can possibly be worth; but I cannot accept it, nor will not. You are most welcome to them as additions to the collected volumes, without any demand or expectation on my part whatever. But I cannot consent to their separate publication. I do not like to risk any fame (whether merited or not), which I have been favoured with, upon compositions which I do not feel to be at all equal to my own notions of what they should be, (and as I flatter myself some *have been*, here and there,) though they may do very well as things without pretension, to add to the publication with the lighter pieces.

"I am very glad that the handwriting was a favourable omen of the *morale* of the piece: but you must not trust to that, for my copyist [2] would write out any thing I desired in all the ignorance of innocence — I hope, however, in this instance, with no great peril to either.

P. S. — I have inclosed your draft *torn*, for fear of accidents by the way — I wish you would not throw temptation in mine. It is not from a disdain of the universal idol, nor from a present superfluity of his treasures, I can assure you, that I refuse to worship him; but what is right is right, and must not yield to circumstances."

Notwithstanding the ruinous state of his pecuniary affairs, the resolution which the poet had formed not to avail himself of the profits of his works still continued to be held sacred by him; and the sum thus offered for the copyright of The Siege of Corinth and Parisina was, as we see, refused, and left untouched in the publisher's hands. It happened that, at this time, a well-known and eminent writer on political science [3] had been, by some misfortune, reduced to pecuniary embarrassment; and the circumstance having become known to Mr. Rogers and Sir James Mackintosh, it occurred to them that a part of the sum thus unappropriated by Lord Byron could not be better bestowed than in relieving the necessities of this gentleman. The suggestion was no sooner conveyed to the noble poet than he proceeded to act upon it; and the following letter to Mr. Rogers refers to his intentions: —

LETTER 237. TO MR. ROGERS.

"February 20. 1816.

"I wrote to you hastily this morning by Murray, to say that I was glad to do as Mackintosh and you suggested about Mr. * * [Godwin]. It occurs to me now, that as I have never seen Mr. * * but once, and consequently have no claim to his acquaintance, that you or Sir James had better arrange it with him in such a manner as may be least offensive to his feelings, and so as not to have the appearance of officiousness nor obtrusion on my part. I hope you will be able to do this, as I should be very sorry to do any thing by him that may be deemed indelicate. The sum Murray offered and offers was and is one thousand and fifty pounds: — this I refused before, because I thought it more than the two things were worth to Murray, and from other objections, which are of no consequence. I have, however, closed with M., in consequence of Sir James's and your suggestion, and propose the sum of six hundred pounds to be transferred to Mr. * * in such a manner as may seem best to your friend, — the remainder I think of for other purposes.

"As Murray has offered the money down for the copyrights, it may be done directly. I am ready to sign and seal immediately, and perhaps it had better not be delayed. I

[1] Had he not *erred*, he had far less achieved.

[2] [The copyist was Lady Byron.]

[3] [Mr. Godwin.]

shall feel very glad if it can be of any use to * * ; only don't let him be plagued, nor think himself obliged and all that, which makes people hate one another, &c. Yours, very truly, "B."

In his mention here of other "purposes," he refers to an intention which he had of dividing the residue of the sum between two other gentlemen of literary celebrity, equally in want of such aid, Mr. Maturin and Mr. * * [Coleridge]. The whole design, however, though entered into with the utmost sincerity on the part of the noble poet, ultimately failed. Mr. Murray, who was well acquainted with the straits to which Lord Byron himself had been reduced, and foresaw that a time might come when even money thus gained would be welcome to him, on learning the uses to which the sum was to be applied, demurred in advancing it, — alleging that, though bound not only by his word but his will to pay the amount to Lord Byron, he did not conceive himself called upon to part with it to others. How earnestly the noble poet himself, though with executions, at the time, impending over his head, endeavoured to urge the point, will appear from the following letter: —

LETTER 238. TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 22. 1816.

"When the sum offered by you, and even *pressed* by you, was declined, it was with reference to a separate publication, as you know and I know. That it was large, I admitted and admit; and *that* made part of my consideration in refusing it, till I knew better what you were likely to make of it. With regard to what has passed or is to pass, about Mr. Maturin, the case is in no respect different from the transfer of former copyrights to Mr. Dallas. Had I taken you at your word, that is, taken your money, I might have used it as I pleased; and it could be in no respect different to you whether I paid it to a w—, or a hospital, or assisted a man of talent in distress. The truth of the matter seems this: you offered more than the poems are worth. I *said* so, and I *think* so; but you know, or at least ought to know, your own business best; and when you recollect what passed between you and me upon pecuniary subjects before this occurred, you will acquit me of any wish to take advantage of your imprudence.

"The things in question shall not be published at all, and there is an end of the matter. "Yours, &c."

The letter that follows will give some idea of those embarrassments in his own affairs, under the pressure of which he could be thus considerate of the wants of others.

LETTER 239. TO MR. MURRAY.

"March 6. 1816.

"I have received the enclosed, and beg you to send the writer immediately any thing of mine, coming under the description of his request — except the 'Curse of Minerva' (which I disown, as stolen and published in the miserable and villanous copy in the Magazine)—it was not, and is not, meant for publication.

"I sent to you to-day for this reason — the books you purchased are again seized, and, as matters stand, had much better be sold at once by public auction.[1] I wish to see you to-morrow to return your bill for them, which, thank heaven, is neither due nor paid. *That* part, as far as *you* are concerned, being settled, (which it can be, and shall be, when I see you to-morrow,) I have no further delicacy about the matter. This is about the tenth execution in as many months; so I am pretty well hardened; but it is fit I should pay the forfeit of my forefathers' extravagances and my own; and, whatever my faults may be, I suppose they will be pretty well expiated in time — or eternity. "Ever, &c.

"P. S. — I need hardly say that I knew nothing till this *day* of the new *seizure*. I had released them from former ones, and thought, when you took them, that they were yours.

"You shall have your bill again to-morrow."

During the month of January, and part of February, his poems of The Siege of Corinth and Parisina were in the hands of the

[1] The sale of these books took place the following month, and they were described in the catalogue as the property of "a Nobleman about to leave England on a Tour."

From a note to Mr. Murray, it would appear that he had been first announced as going to the Morea: —

"I hope that the catalogue of the books, &c., has not been published without my seeing it. I must reserve several, and many ought not to be printed. The advertisement is a very bad one. I am not going to the *Morea*; and if I was, you might as well advertise a man in Russia as going to *Yorkshire*. — Ever, &c."

Together with the books was sold an article of furniture, which is now in the possession of Mr. Murray, namely, "a large screen covered with portraits of actors, pugilists, representations of boxing-matches," &c.

printers, and about the end of the latter month made their appearance. The following letters are the only ones I find connected with their publication.

LETTER 240. TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 3. 1816.

"I sent for 'Marmion' (which I return), because it occurred to me there might be a resemblance between part of 'Parisina' and a similar scene in Canto 2d of 'Marmion.' I fear there is, though I never thought of it before, and could hardly wish to imitate that which is inimitable.[1] I wish you would ask Mr. Gifford whether I ought to say any thing upon it; — I had completed the story on the passage from Gibbon, which in fact leads to a like scene naturally, without a thought of the kind; but it comes upon me not very comfortably.

"There are a few words and phrases I want to alter in the MS., and should like to do it before you print, and will return it in an hour.

"Yours ever.

"BN."

LETTER 241. TO MR. MURRAY.

"February 20. 1816.

"To return to *our* business — your epistles are vastly agreeable. With regard to the observations on carelessness, &c. I think, with all humility, that the gentle reader has considered a rather uncommon, and designedly irregular, versification for haste and negligence. The measure is not that of any of the other poems, which (I believe) were allowed to be tolerably correct, according to Byshe and the fingers — or ears — by which bards write, and readers reckon. Great part of 'The Siege' is in (I think) what the learned call Anapests, (though I am not sure, being heinously forgetful of my metres and my 'Gradus,') and many of the lines intentionally longer or shorter than its rhyming companion; and rhyme also occurring at greater or less intervals of caprice or convenience.

"I mean not to say that this is right or good, but merely that I could have been smoother, had it appeared to me of advantage; and that I was not otherwise without being aware of the deviation, though I now feel sorry for it, as I would undoubtedly rather please than not. My wish has been to try at something different from my former efforts; as I endeavoured to make them differ from each other. The versification of 'The Corsair' is not that of 'Lara;' nor 'The Giaour' that of 'The Bride;' Childe Harold is again varied from these; and I strove to vary the last somewhat from *all* of the others.

"Excuse all this d—d nonsense and egotism. The fact is, that I am rather trying to think on the subject of this note, than really thinking on it. — I did not know you had called; you are always admitted and welcome when you choose.

"Yours, &c. &c.

"BN.

"P. S. — You need not be in any apprehension or grief on my account: were I to be beaten down by the world and its inheritors, I should have succumbed to many things years ago. You must not mistake my *not* bullying for dejection; nor imagine that because I feel, I am to faint: — but enough for the present.

"I am sorry for Sotheby's row. What the devil is it about? I thought it all settled; and if I can do any thing about him or Ivan still, I am ready and willing. I do not think it proper for me just now to be much behind the scenes, but I will see the committee and move upon it, if Sotheby likes.

"If you see Mr. Sotheby, will you tell him that I wrote to Mr. Coleridge, on getting Mr. Sotheby's note, and have, I hope, done what Mr. S. wished on that subject?"

[1] ["She stood, I said, all pale, and still,
The living cause of Hugo's ill;
Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turn'd to either side —
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew —
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood," &c.

Parisina.

"Her look composed, and steady eye,
Bespoke a matchless constancy;
And there she stood so calm and pale,
That, but her breathing did not fail,
And motion slight of eye and head,
And of her bosom, warranted
That neither sense nor pulse she lacks.
You must have thought a form of wax,
Wrought to the very life, was there —
So still she was, so pale, so fair."

Marmion.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1816.

APPEARANCE OF FARE THEE WELL, AND A SKETCH. — CLOSE OF LORD BYRON'S LONDON LIFE. — GLEANINGS OF HIS MEMORANDUM-BOOK. — DISASTROUS AND HUMILIATING CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH HE TOOK LEAVE OF ENGLAND. — DEPARTURE FOR OSTEND. — BRUSSELS. — WATERLOO. — GENEVA. — COMPLETION OF THE THIRD CANTO OF CHILDE HAROLD. — LETTERS TO MURRAY AND ROGERS. — DIODATI. — MONODY ON SHERIDAN. — JOURNAL OF A TOUR OF THE BERNESE ALPS.

It was about the middle of April that his two celebrated copies of verses, "Fare thee well," and "A Sketch[1]," made their appearance in the newspapers: — and while the latter poem was generally, and, it must be owned, justly condemned, as a sort of literary assault on an obscure female, whose situation ought to have placed her as much *beneath* his satire as the undignified mode of his attack certainly raised her *above* it[2], with regard to the other poem, opinions were a good deal more divided. To many it appeared a strain of true conjugal tenderness, a kind of appeal, which no woman with a heart could resist: while by others, on the contrary, it was considered to be a mere showy effusion of sentiment, as difficult for real feeling to have produced as it was easy for fancy and art, and altogether unworthy of the deep interests involved in the subject. To this latter opinion, I confess my own to have, at first, strongly inclined; and suspicious as I could not help regarding the sentiment that could, at such a moment, indulge in such verses, the taste that prompted or sanctioned their publication appeared to me even still more questionable. On reading, however, his own account of all the circumstances in the Memoranda, I found that on both points I had, in common with a large portion of the public, done him injustice. He there described, and in a manner whose sincerity there was no doubting, the swell of tender recollections under the influence of which, as he sat one night musing in his study, these stanzas were produced, — the tears, as he said, falling fast over the paper as he wrote them.[3] Neither, from that account, did it appear to have been from any wish or intention of his own, but through the injudicious zeal of a friend whom he had suffered to take a copy, that the verses met the public eye.

The appearance of these poems gave additional violence to the angry and inquisitorial feeling now abroad against him; and the title under which both pieces were immediately announced by various publishers, as "Poems by Lord Byron on his Domestic Circumstances," carried with it a sufficient exposure of the utter unfitness of such themes for rhyme. It is, indeed, only in those emotions and passions of which imagination forms a predominant ingredient, — such as love, in its first dreams, before reality has come to embody or dispel them, or sorrow, in its wane, when beginning to pass away from the heart into the fancy, — that poetry ought ever to be employed as an interpreter of feeling. For the expression of all those immediate affections and disquietudes that have their root in the actual realities of life, the art of the poet, from the very circumstance of its being an art, as well as from the coloured form in which it is accustomed to transmit impressions, cannot be otherwise than a medium as false as it is feeble.

To so very low an ebb had the industry of his assailants now succeeded in reducing his private character, that it required no small degree of courage, even among that class who are supposed to be the most tolerant of domestic irregularities, to invite him into their society. One distinguished lady of fashion, however, ventured so far as, on the eve of his departure from England, to make a party for him expressly; and nothing short, perhaps, of that high station in society which a life as blameless as it is brilliant has secured to her, could have placed beyond all reach of misrepresentation, at that moment, such a compliment to one marked with the world's censure so deeply. At this assembly of Lady Jersey's he made his last appearance, publicly, in England; and the amusing account given of some of the company in his Memo-

[1] [See *Works*, p. 469.]

[2] ["Was this obscure female innocent, or was she guilty? If innocent, then was there an unhappy mistake, and, no matter what her rank, reparation was due. If guilty, the rank to which she had been raised put her on a level with Lord Byron. Her situation, therefore, if it was what he says it was, and he must have known that better than any one, ought not to have placed her *beneath* his satire. And as for an undignified attack raising the object of it *above* it — that is a mistake; for the object of an attack sinks under and rises above it, not according as the attack is dignified or undignified, but according as it is merited or unmerited — the charge true or false."—Wilson, 1830.]

[3] [The appearance of the MS. confirms this account of the circumstances under which it was written. It is blotted all over with the marks of tears.]

randa, — of the various and characteristic ways in which the temperature of their manner towards him was affected by the cloud under which he now appeared, — was one of the passages of that Memoir it would have been most desirable, perhaps, to have preserved; though, from being a gallery of sketches, all personal and many satirical, but a small portion of it, if any, could have been presented to the public till a time when the originals had long left the scene, and any interest they might once have excited was gone with themselves. Besides the noble hostess herself, whose kindness to him, on this occasion, he never forgot, there was also one other person (then Miss Mercer, now Lady Keith), whose frank and fearless cordiality to him on that evening he most gratefully commemorated, — adding, in acknowledgment of a still more generous service, "She is a high-minded woman, and showed me more friendship than I deserved from her. I heard also of her having defended me in a large company, which *at that time* required more courage and firmness than most women possess."

As we are now approaching so near the close of his London life, I shall here throw together the few remaining recollections of that period with which the gleanings of his Memorandum-book, so often referred to, furnish me.

"I liked the Dandies[1]; they were always very civil to *me*, though in general they disliked literary people, and persecuted and mystified Madame de Stael, Lewis, Horace Twiss, and the like, damnably. They persuaded Madame de Stael that Alvanley had a hundred thousand a year, &c. &c., till she praised him to his *face* for his *beauty!* and made a set at him for Albertine[2], and a hundred fooleries besides. The truth is, that, though I gave up the business early, I had a tinge of dandyism[3] in my minority, and probably retained enough of it to conciliate the great ones at five-and-twenty. I had gamed, and drunk, and taken my degrees in most dissipations; and having no pedantry, and not being overbearing, we ran quietly together. I knew them all more or less, and they made me a member of Watier's (a superb club at that time), being, I take it, the only literary man (except *two others*, both men of the world, Moore and Spenser) in it. Our masquerade[4] was a grand one; so was the dandy-ball too, at the Argyle, but *that* (the latter) was given by the four chiefs, Brummel, Mildmay, Alvanley, and Pierrepoint, if I err not.

"I was a member of the Alfred, too, being elected while in Greece. It was pleasant; a little too sober and literary, and bored[5] with Sotheby and Sir Francis D'Ivernois; but one met Peel, and Ward, and Valentia, and many other pleasant or known people; and it was, upon the whole, a decent resource in a rainy day, in a dearth of parties, or parliament, or in an empty season.

"I belonged, or belong, to the following clubs or societies: — to the Alfred; to the Cocoa Tree[6]; to Watier's; to the Union; to Racket's (at Brighton); to the Pugilistic; to the Owls, or "Fly-by-night;" to the *Cambridge* Whig Club; to the Harrow Club, Cambridge; and to one or two private clubs;

[1] ["Our present ephemeral '*dandy*' is akin to the '*maccaroni*' of my earlier days. The expression has become classical by the use of it in one of Lord Byron's poems —

"'But I am but a nameless sort of person,
A broken Dandy lately on my travels.'"

GLENBERVIE, 1822.]

[2] ["'Libertine,' as Brummel baptized her, though the poor girl was and is as correct as maid or wife can be; and very amiable withal."— *MS.*]

[3] Petrarch was, it appears, also in his youth, a Dandy. "Recollect," he says, in a letter to his brother, "the time when we wore white habits, on which the least spot, or a plait ill placed, would have been a subject of grief; when our shoes were so tight we suffered martyrdom," &c.

[4] To this masquerade he went in the habit of a Caloyer, or Eastern monk, — a dress particularly well calculated to set off the beauty of his fine countenance, which was accordingly, that night, the subject of general admiration.

[5] [The Alfred Club was established in Albemarle Street, in 1808. "The Alfred, like all other clubs, was much haunted with *boars* — tusky monsters, which delight to range where men most do congregate; as they are kept at the spear's point pretty much in private society. A boar, or bore, is always remarkable for something respectable; such as wealth, character, high birth, acknowledged talent — or, in short, for something that forbids people to turn him out by the shoulders, or in other words to cut him dead. Much of this respectability is supplied by the mere circumstance of belonging to a society of clubbists within whose districts the boar obtains free warren and may wallow or grunt at pleasure. Old stagers in the club know and avoid the fated corner and arm chair which he haunts; but he often rushes from his lair on the unexperienced."— WALTER SCOTT: *MS.*]

[6] [In St. James's Street; one of the oldest clubs in London. It is thus described by Gibbon, in 1762: — "This respectable body, of which I have the honour of being a member, affords every evening a sight truly English. Twenty or thirty, perhaps, of the first men in the kingdom, in point of fortune and fashion, supping at little tables covered with a napkin, in the middle of a coffee-room, upon a bit of cold meat, or a sandwich, and drinking a glass of punch. At present we are full of king's counsellors and lords of the bed-chamber; who, having jumped into the ministry, make a very singular medley of their old principles and language with their modern ones."— *Misc. Works*, vol. i. p. 154.]

to the Hampden (political) Club; and to the Italian Carbonari, &c. &c., 'though last, *not least*.' I got into all these, and never stood for any other — at least to my own knowledge. I declined being proposed to several others, though pressed to stand candidate."

"When I met H ** L ** [Hudson Lowe], the gaoler, at Lord Holland's, before he sailed for St. Helena, the discourse turned upon the battle of Waterloo. I asked him whether the dispositions of Napoleon were those of a great general? He answered, disparagingly, 'that they were very *simple*.' I had always thought that a degree of simplicity was an ingredient of greatness."

"I was much struck with the simplicity of Grattan's manners in private life; they were odd, but they were natural.[1] Curran used to take him off, bowing to the very ground, and 'thanking God that he had no peculiarities of gesture or appearance,' in a way irresistibly ludicrous; and * * [Rogers] used to call him a 'Sentimental Harlequin.'"

"Curran! Curran's the man who struck me most.[2] Such imagination! there never was any thing like it that I ever saw or heard of. His *published* life — his published speeches, give you *no* idea of the man — none at all. He was a *machine* of imagination, as some one said of Piron that he was an epigrammatic machine.

"I did not see a great deal of Curran — only in 1813; but I met him at home (for he used to call on me), and in society, at Mackintosh's, Holland House, &c. &c.; and he was wonderful even to me, who had seen many remarkable men of the time."[3]

"Baillie (commonly called *long* Baillie, a very clever man, but odd) complained to our friend Scrope B. Davies, in riding, that he had a *stitch* in his side. 'I don't wonder at it,' said Scrope, 'for you ride *like a tailor*.' Whoever had seen Baillie on horseback, with his very tall figure on a small nag, would not deny the justice of the repartee."

"When Brummel was obliged (by that affair of poor Meyler, who thence acquired the name of 'Dick the Dandy-killer' — it was about money, and debt, and all that) to retire to France, he knew no French, and having obtained a grammar for the purpose of study, our friend Scrope Davies was asked what progress Brummel had made in French; he responded, 'that Brummel had been stopped, like Buonaparte in Russia, by the *Elements*.'"

"I have put this pun into Beppo[4], which is 'a fair exchange and no robbery;' for Scrope made his fortune at several dinners (as he owned himself) by repeating occasionally, as his own, some of the buffooneries with which I had encountered him in the morning."[5]

[1] ["There is nobody so odd, so gentle, and so admirable; his sayings are not to be separated from his manner. Plunket never addresses Grattan without 'Sir,' with a respectful voice. This mark of respect, or almost reverence, is common amongst the Irish, and certainly most amply due to this amiable and venerable person." — SIR J. MACKINTOSH, 1818.]

[2] In his Memoranda there were equally enthusiastic praises of Curran. "The riches," said he, "of his Irish imagination were exhaustless. I have heard that man speak more poetry than I have ever seen written,—though I saw him seldom and but occasionally. I saw him presented to Madame de Stael at Mackintosh's; — it was the grand confluence between the Rhone and the Saone, and and they were both so d—d ugly, that I could not help wondering how the best intellects of France and Ireland could have taken up respectively such residences."

In another part, however, he was somewhat more fair to Madame de Stael's personal appearance: — "Her figure was not bad; her legs tolerable; her arms good. Altogether, I can conceive her having been a desirable woman, allowing a little imagination for her soul, and so forth. She would have made a great man."

[3] [When Charles Mathews first began to imitate Curran in Dublin — in society I mean — Curran sent for him, and said, the moment he entered the room, "Mr. Mathews, you are a first-rate artist; and since you are to do my picture, pray allow me to give you a sitting." Every one knows how admirably Mathews succeeded in finishing the portraiture begun under these circumstances. No one was more aware of the truth of the representation than Curran himself. In his latter and feeble days he was riding in Hyde Park one morning, bowed down over the saddle and utterly dejected in his air. Mathews happened to observe and saluted him. Curran stopped his horse for a moment, squeezed Charles by the hand, and said, in that deep whisper which the comedian so exquisitely mimicked, "Don't speak to *me*, my dear — you are the only Curran now."— LOCKHART.]

[4] ["Crush'd was Napoleon by the northern Thor,
Who knock'd his army down with icy hammer,
Stopp'd by the *clements*, like a whaler, or
A blundering novice in his new French grammar."
Works, p. 150.]

[5] ["Byron occasionally said what are called good things, but never studied for them. They came naturally and easily, and mixed with the comic or the serious as it happened. A professed wit is of all earthly companions the most intolerable. He is like a schoolboy with his pockets stuffed with crackers."— WALTER SCOTT: *MS.*

"No first-rate author was ever what one understands by a *great* conversational wit. Swift's wit in common society was either the strong sense of a wonderful man unconsciously exerting his powers; or that of the same being wilfully unbending, wilfully in fact degrading himself. Who ever heard of any fame for conversational wit lingering over the memory of a Shakspeare, a Milton, — even of a Dryden or Pope? Johnson is, perhaps, a solitary ex-

"Sotheby is a good man, rhymes well (if not wisely), but is a bore. He seizes you by the button. One night of a rout, at Mrs. Hope's, he had fastened upon me, notwithstanding my symptoms of manifest distress, (for I was in love, and had just nicked a minute when neither mothers, nor husbands, nor rivals, nor gossips, were near my then idol, who was beautiful as the statues of the gallery where we stood at the time,) — Sotheby, I say, had seized upon me by the button and the heart-strings, and spared neither. William Spencer, who likes fun, and don't dislike mischief, saw my case, and coming up to us both, took me by the hand, and pathetically bade me farewell; 'for,' said he, 'I see it is all over with you.' Sotheby then went away. *Sic me servavit Apollo.*" [1]

"I remember seeing Blucher in the London assemblies, and never saw any thing of his age less venerable. With the voice and manners of a recruiting sergeant, he pretended to the honours of a hero, — just as if a stone could be worshipped because a man had stumbled over it."

We now approach the close of this eventful period of his history. In a note to Mr. Rogers, written a short time before his departure for Ostend [2], he says, — "My sister is now with me, and leaves town to-morrow: we shall not meet again for some time, at all events — if ever; and, under these circumstances, I trust to stand excused to you and Mr. Sheridan for being unable to wait upon him this evening."

This was his last interview with his sister, — almost the only person from whom he now parted with regret; it being, as he said, doubtful *which* had given him most pain, the enemies who attacked or the friends who condoled with him. Those beautiful and most tender verses, "Though the day of my destiny's over," were now his parting tribute to her [3] who, through all this bitter trial, had been his sole consolation; and, though known to most readers, so expressive are they of his wounded feelings at this crisis, that there are few, I think, who will object to seeing some stanzas of them here.

"Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain — it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn —
They may torture, but shall not subdue me —
'Tis of *thee* that I think — not of them.

"Though human, thou didst not deceive me;
Though woman, thou didst not forsake;
Though lov'd, thou foreborest to grieve me;
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake;
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me;
Though parted, it was not to fly;
Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me;
Nor mute, that the world might belie.

"From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*."

On a scrap of paper, in his handwriting, dated April 14. 1816, I find the following list of his attendants, with an annexed outline of his projected tour: — "*Servants*, —— Berger, a Swiss, William Fletcher, and Robert Rushton — John William Polidori, M. D. — Switzerland, Flanders, Italy, and (perhaps) France." The two English servants, it will be observed, were the same "yeoman" and "page" who had set out with him on his youthful travels in 1809; and now, — for the second and last time taking leave of his country, — on the 25th of April he sailed for Ostend.

The circumstances under which Lord Byron now took leave of England were such as, in the case of any ordinary person, could not be considered otherwise than disastrous and humiliating. He had, in the course of one short year, gone through every variety of domestic misery: — had seen his hearth eight or nine times profaned by the visitations of the law, and been only saved

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ception. More shame to him! He was the most indolent great man that ever lived, and threw away in his talk more than he ever took pains to embalm in his writings. It is true that Boswell has in a great measure counteracted all this. But here is no defence. Few great men can expect to have a Boswell, and none *ought* to wish to have one, far less to trust to having one. A man should not keep fine clothes locked up in his chest, only that his valet may occasionally show off in them: no, nor yet strut about in them in his chamber but that his valet may puff him and his finery abroad. What might not he have done who wrote Rasselas in the evenings of eight days to get money enough for his mother's funeral expenses? — As it is, what has not Johnson done? Is it nothing to be the first intellect of *an age?* And who seriously talks even of Burke, as having been more than a clever boy in the presence of old Samuel?" — *Anon. MS.*]

[1] ["*Ink.* For God's sake let's go, or the bore will be here. Come, come: nay, I'm off.
Tra. You are right, and I'll follow;
'Tis high time for a '*Sic me servavit Apollo.*'"
The Blues, a Literary Eclogue: Works, p. 509.]

[2] Dated April 16.

[3] It will be seen, from a subsequent letter, that the first stanza of that most cordial of Farewells, "My boat is on the shore," was also written at this time.

from a prison by the privileges of his rank. He had alienated, as far as they had ever been his, the affections of his wife; and now, rejected by her, and condemned by the world, was betaking himself to an exile which had not even the dignity of appearing voluntary, as the excommunicating voice of society seemed to leave him no other resource. Had he been of that class of unfeeling and self-satisfied natures from whose hard surface the reproaches of others fall pointless, he might have found in insensibility a sure refuge against reproach; but, on the contrary, the same sensitiveness that kept him so awake to the applauses of mankind rendered him, in a still more intense degree, alive to their censure. Even the strange, perverse pleasure which he felt in painting himself unamiably to the world did not prevent him from being both startled and pained when the world took him at his word; and, like a child in a mask before a looking-glass, the dark semblance which he had, half in sport, put on, when reflected back upon him from the mirror of public opinion, shocked even himself.

Thus surrounded by vexations, and thus deeply feeling them, it is not too much to say, that any other spirit but his own would have sunk under the struggle, and lost, perhaps irrecoverably, that level of self-esteem which alone affords a stand against the shocks of fortune. But in him, — furnished as was his mind with reserves of strength, waiting to be called out, — the very intensity of the pressure brought relief by the proportionate re-action which it produced. Had his transgressions and frailties been visited with no more than their due portion of punishment, there can be little doubt that a very different result would have ensued. Not only would such an excitement have been insufficient to waken up the new energies still dormant in him, but that consciousness of his own errors, which was for ever livelily present in his mind, would, under such circumstances, have been left, undisturbed by any unjust provocation, to work its usual softening and, perhaps, humbling influences on his spirit. But, — luckily, as it proved, for the further triumphs of his genius, — no such moderation was exercised. The storm of invective raised around him, so utterly out of proportion with his offences, and the base calumnies that were every where heaped upon his name, left to his wounded pride no other resource than in the same summoning up of strength, the same instinct of resistance to injustice, which had first forced out the energies of his youthful genius, and was now destined to give a still bolder and loftier range to its powers.

It was, indeed, not without truth, said of him by Goethe, that he was inspired by the Genius of Pain; for, from the first to the last of his agitated career, every fresh recruitment of his faculties was imbibed from that bitter source. His chief incentive, when a boy, to distinction was, as we have seen, that mark of deformity on his person, by an acute sense of which he was first stung into the ambition of being great.[1] As, with an evident reference to his own fate, he himself describes the feeling, —

> "Deformity is daring.
> It is its essence to o'ertake mankind
> By heart and soul, and make itself the equal, —
> Ay, the superior of the rest. There is
> A spur in its halt movements, to become
> All that the others cannot, in such things
> As still are free to both, to compensate
> For stepdame Nature's avarice at first."[2]

Then came the disappointment of his youthful passion, — the lassitude and remorse of premature excess, — the lone friendlessness of his entrance into life, and the ruthless assault upon his first literary efforts, — all links in that chain of trials, errors, and sufferings, by which his great mind was gradually and painfully drawn out; — all bearing their respective shares in accomplishing that destiny which seems to have decreed that the triumphal march of his genius should be over the waste and ruins of his heart. He appeared, indeed, himself to have had an instinctive consciousness that it was out of such ordeals his strength and glory were to arise, as his whole life was passed in courting agitation and difficulties; and whenever the scenes around him were too tame to furnish such excitement, he flew to fancy or memory for "thorns" whereon to "lean his breast."

But the greatest of his trials, as well as triumphs, was yet to come. The last stage of this painful, though glorious, course, in

[1] In one of his letters to Mr. Hunt, he declares it to be his own opinion that "an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of 'an uneasy mind in an uneasy body;' disease or deformity," he adds, "have been the attendants of many of our best. Collins mad — Chatterton, *I* think, mad — Cowper mad — Pope crooked — Milton blind," &c. &c.

[2] The Deformed Transformed. *Works*, p. 304.
["Whosoever," says Lord Bacon, "hath any thing fixed in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn; therefore all deformed persons are extreme bold." — *Essay* IV.]

which fresh power was, at every step, wrung from out his soul, was that at which we are now arrived, his marriage and its results,— without which, dear as was the price paid by him in peace and character, his career would have been incomplete, and the world still left in ignorance of the full compass of his genius. It is, indeed, worthy of remark, that it was not till his domestic circumstances began to darken around him that his fancy, which had long been idle, again rose upon the wing,—both The Siege of Corinth and Parisina having been produced but a short time before the separation. How conscious he was, too, that the turmoil which followed was the true element of his restless spirit, may be collected from several passages of his letters at that period, in one of which he even mentions that his health had become all the better for the conflict. — "It is odd," he says, "but agitation or contest of any kind gives a rebound to my spirits, and sets me up for the time."

This buoyancy it was,— this irrepressible spring of mind, — that now enabled him to bear up not only against the assaults of others, but, what was still more difficult, against his own thoughts and feelings. The muster of all his mental resources to which, in self-defence, he had been driven, but opened to him the yet undreamed extent and capacity of his powers, and inspired him with a proud confidence that he should yet shine down these calumnious mists, convert censure to wonder, and compel even those who could not approve to admire.

The route which he now took, through Flanders and by the Rhine, is best traced in his own matchless verses, which leave a portion of their glory on all that they touch, and lend to scenes, already clothed with immortality by nature and by history, the no less durable associations of undying song. On his leaving Brussels, an incident occurred which would be hardly worth relating, were it not for the proof it affords of the malicious assiduity with which every thing to his disadvantage was now caught up and circulated in England. Mr. Pryce Gordon, a gentleman who appears to have seen a good deal of him during his short stay at Brussels, thus relates the anecdote : —

"Lord Byron travelled in a huge coach, copied from the celebrated one of Napoleon, taken at Genappe, with additions. Besides a *lit de repos*, it contained a library, a plate-chest, and every apparatus for dining in it. It was not, however, found sufficiently capacious for his baggage and suite; and he purchased a calèche at Brussels for his servants. It broke down going to Waterloo, and I advised him to return it, as it seemed to be a crazy machine; but as he had made a deposit of forty Napoleons (certainly double its value), the honest Fleming would not consent to restore the cash, or take back his packing case, except under a forfeiture of thirty Napoleons. As his Lordship was to set out the following day, he begged me to make the best arrangement I could in the affair. He had no sooner taken his departure, than the worthy *sellier* inserted a paragraph in 'The Brussels Oracle,' stating 'that the noble *milor Anglais* had absconded with his calèche, value 1800 francs!'"[1]

In the Courier of May 13., the Brussels account of this transaction is thus copied : —

"The following is an extract from the Dutch Mail, dated Brussels, May 8th : — In the Journal de Belgique, of this date, is a petition from a coachmaker at Brussels to the president of the Tribunal de Premier Instance, stating that he has sold to Lord Byron a carriage, &c. for 1882 francs, of which he has received 847 francs; but that his Lordship, who is going away the same day, refuses to pay him the remaining 1035 francs; he begs permission to seize the carriage, &c. This being granted, he put it into the hands of a proper officer, who went to signify the above to Lord Byron, and was informed by the landlord of the hotel that his Lordship was gone without having given him any thing to pay the debt, on which the officer seized a chaise belonging to his Lordship as security for the amount."

It was not till the beginning of the following month that a contradiction of this falsehood, stating the real circumstances of the case, as above related, was communicated to the Morning Chronicle, in a letter from Brussels, signed "Pryce L. Gordon."

Another anecdote, of far more interest, has been furnished from the same respectable source. It appears that the two first stanzas of the verses relating to Waterloo, "Stop, for thy tread is on an empire's dust[2]," were written at Brussels, after a visit to that memorable field, and transcribed by Lord Byron, next morning, in an album belonging to the lady of the gentleman who communicates the anecdote.

"A few weeks after he had written them (says the relater), the well-known artist, R. R. Reinagle, a friend of mine, arrived in Brussels, when I invited him to dine with

[1] [Major Pryce Gordon, in 1831, published his "Personal Memoirs," in two volumes, 8vo.]

[2] Childe Harold, canto 3. stanza 17.

me, and showed him the lines, requesting him to embellish them with an appropriate vignette to the following passage: —

" ' Here his last flight the haughty eagle flew,
Then tore, with bloody beak, the fatal plain;
Pierced with the shafts of banded nations through,
Ambition's life, and labours, all were vain —
He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.'

Mr. Reinagle sketched with a pencil a spirited chained eagle, grasping the earth with his talons.

" I had occasion to write to his Lordship, and mentioned having got this clever artist to draw a vignette to his beautiful lines, and the liberty he had taken by altering the action of the eagle. In reply to this, he wrote to me, — ' Reinagle is a better poet and a better ornothologist than I am; eagles, and all birds of prey, attack with their talons, and not with their beaks, and I have altered the line thus: —

" ' Then tore, with bloody talon, the rent plain.'

This is, I think, a better line, besides its poetical justice.' I need hardly add, when I communicated this flattering compliment to the painter, that he was highly gratified."

From Brussels the noble traveller pursued his course along the Rhine, — a line of road which he has strewed over with all the riches of poesy; and, arriving at Geneva, took up his abode at the well-known hotel, Sécheron. After a stay of a few weeks at this place, he removed to a villa, in the neighbourhood, called Diodati, very beautifully situated on the high banks of the Lake, where he established his residence for the remainder of the summer.

I shall now give the few letters in my possession written by him at this time, and then subjoin to them such anecdotes as I have been able to collect relative to the same period.

LETTER 242. TO MR. MURRAY.

" Ouchy, near Lausanne, June 27. 1816.

" I am thus far (kept by stress of weather) on my way back to Diodati (near Geneva) from a voyage in my boat round the Lake; and I enclose you a sprig of *Gibbon's acacia* and some rose-leaves from his garden, which, with part of his house, I have just seen. You will find honourable mention, in his Life, made of this ' acacia,' when he walked out on the night of concluding his history.[1] The garden and *summer-house*, where he composed, are neglected, and the last utterly decayed; but they still show it as his ' cabinet,' and seem perfectly aware of his memory.

" My route through Flanders, and by the Rhine, to Switzerland, was all I expected, and more.

" I have traversed all Rousseau's ground, with the Héloise before me; and am struck, to a degree that I cannot express, with the force and accuracy of his descriptions and the beauty of their reality.[2] Meillerie, Clarens, and Vevay, and the Château de Chillon, are places of which I shall say little, because all I could say must fall short of the impressions they stamp.

" Three days ago, we were most nearly wrecked in a squall off Meillerie, and driven to shore. I ran no risk, being so near the rocks, and a good swimmer; but our party were wet, and incommoded a good deal. The wind was strong enough to blow down some trees, as we found at landing: however, all is righted and right, and we are thus far on our teturn.

" Dr. Polidori is not here, but at Diodati, left behind in hospital with a sprained ankle, which he acquired in tumbling from a wall — he can't jump.

" I shall be glad to hear you are well, and have received for me certain helms and swords, sent from Waterloo, which I rode over with pain and pleasure.

" I have finished a third canto of Childe Harold (consisting of one hundred and

[1] [" It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious. I will add two facts, which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five, quartos. 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes, excepting those of the author and the printer: the faults and the merits are exclusively my own."— *Gibbon's Life*, p. 255.]

[2] [" The extreme freshness of the traditions, and the extraordinary beauty of the spot, gave a *reality* to the fiction of an extraordinary kind. It required great power of genius to make the associations of a fiction separately felt in this magnificent country."— SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH: *Life*, vol. ii. p. 298.]

seventeen stanzas), longer than either of the two former, and in some parts, it may be, better; but of course on that I cannot determine. I shall send it by the first safe-looking opportunity. Ever, &c."

LETTER 243. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Diodati, near Geneva, July 22. 1816.

"I wrote to you a few weeks ago, and Dr. Polidori received your letter; but the packet has not made its appearance, nor the epistle, of which you gave notice therein. I enclose you an advertisement [1], which was copied by Dr. Polidori, and which appears to be about the most impudent imposition that ever issued from Grub Street. I need hardly say that I know nothing of all this trash, nor whence it may spring, — 'Odes to St. Helena,' — 'Farewells to England,' &c. &c.; and if it can be disavowed, or is worth disavowing, you have full authority to do so. I never wrote, nor conceived, a line on any thing of the kind, any more than of two other things with which I was saddled — something about 'Gaul,' and another about 'Mrs. La Valette;' and as to the 'Lily of France,' I should as soon think of celebrating a turnip. On the 'Morning of my Daughter's Birth,' I had other things to think of than verses; and should never have dreamed of such an invention, till Mr. Johnston and his pamphlet's advertisement broke in upon me with a new light on the crafts and subtleties of the demon of printing, — or rather publishing.

"I did hope that some succeeding lie would have superseded the thousand and one which were accumulated during last winter. I can forgive whatever may be said of or against me, but not what they make me say or sing for myself. It is enough to answer for what I have written; but it were too much for Job himself to bear what one has not. I suspect that when the Arab Patriarch wished that his 'enemy had written a book,' he did not anticipate his own name on the title-page. I feel quite as much bored with this foolery as it deserves, and more than I should be, if I had not a headach.

"Of Glenarvon [2], Madame de Stael told me (ten days ago, at Copet) marvellous and grievous things; but I have seen nothing of it but the motto, which promises amiably 'for us and for our tragedy.' If such be the posy, what should the ring be? 'a name to all succeeding [3],' &c. The generous moment selected for the publication is probably its kindest accompaniment, and — truth to say — the time *was* well chosen. I have not even a guess at the contents, except from the very vague accounts I have heard.

"I ought to be ashamed of the egotism of this letter. It is not my fault altogether, and I shall be but too happy to drop the subject when others will allow me.

"I am in tolerable plight, and in my last letter told you what I had done in the way of all rhyme. I trust that you prosper, and that your authors are in good condition. I should suppose your stud has received some increase, by what I hear. Bertram must be a good horse; does he run next meeting? I hope you will beat the Row. Yours alway, &c."

LETTER 244. TO MR. ROGERS.

"Diodati, near Geneva, July 29. 1816.

"Do you recollect a book, Mathieson's Letters [4], which you lent me, which I have still, and yet hope to return to your library? Well, I have encountered at Copet and elsewhere Gray's correspondent, that same Bonstetten, to whom I lent the translation of his correspondent's epistles, for a few days; but all he could remember of Gray amounts to little, except that he was the most 'melancholy and gentleman-like' of all possible poets. Bonstetten himself is a fine and very lively old man, and much esteemed by his compatriots; he is also a *littérateur* of good repute, and all his friends have a mania of addressing to him volumes of letters — Mathieson, Muller the historian, &c. &c. He is a good deal at Copet, where I have met him a few times. All there are well, except Rocca, who, I am sorry to say, looks in a very bad state of health. Schlegel is in high force, and Madame as brilliant as ever.

"I came here by the Netherlands and the Rhine route, and Basle, Berne, Morat, and Lausanne. I have circumnavigated the Lake, and go to Chamouni with the first fair

[1] The following was the advertisement enclosed: —

"Neatly printed and hot-pressed, 2*s.* 6*d.*

"Lord Byron's Farewell to England, with Three other Poems — Ode to St. Helena, to My Daughter on her Birthday, and to the Lily of France.

"Printed by J. Johnston, Cheapside, 335.; Oxford, 9.

"The above beautiful Poems will be read with the most lively interest, as it is probable they will be the last of the author's that will appear in England."

[2] [A novel by Lady Caroline Lamb. See BYRONIANA.]

[3] The motto is from the Corsair —

"He left a name to all succeeding times,
Link'd with one virtue and a thousand crimes."

[4] ["Letters written from various Parts of the Continent, between the Years 1785 and 1794." M. Mathieson died at Worlitz, in Dessau, 1831.]

weather; but really we have had lately such stupid mists, fogs, and perpetual density, that one would think Castlereagh had the Foreign Affairs of the kingdom of Heaven also on his hands. I need say nothing to you of these parts, you having traversed them already. I do not think of Italy before September. I have read Glenarvon, and have also seen Ben. Constant's Adolphe, and his preface, denying the real people. It is a work which leaves an unpleasant impression, but very consistent with the consequences of not being in love, which is, perhaps, as disagreeable as any thing, except being so. I doubt, however, whether all such *liens* (as he calls them) terminate so wretchedly as his hero and heroine's.

"There is a third canto (a longer than either of the former) of Childe Harold finished, and some smaller things,—among them a story on the Château de Chillon; I only wait a good opportunity to transmit them to the grand Murray, who, I hope, flourishes. Where is Moore? Why is he not out? My love to him, and my perfect consideration and remembrances to all, particularly to Lord and Lady Holland, and to your Duchess of Somerset.[1]

"Ever, &c."

"P. S.—I send you a *fac-simile*, a note of Bonstetten's, thinking you might like to see the hand of Gray's correspondent."

LETTER 245. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Diodati, Sept. 29. 1816.

"I am very much flattered by Mr. Gifford's good opinion of the MSS., and shall be still more so if it answers your expectations and justifies his kindness. I liked it myself, but that must go for nothing. The feelings with which most of it was written need not be envied me. With regard to the price, *I* fixed *none*, but left it to Mr. Kinnaird, Mr. Shelley, and yourself, to arrange. Of course, they would do their best; and as to yourself, I knew you would make no difficulties. But I agree with Mr. Kinnaird perfectly, that the concluding *five hundred* should be only *conditional*; and for my own sake, I wish it to be added, only in case of your selling a certain number, *that number* to be fixed by *yourself*. I hope this is fair. In every thing of this kind there must be risk; and till that be past, in one way or the other, I would not willingly add to it, particularly in times like the present. And pray always recollect that nothing could mortify me more — no failure on my own part — than having made you lose by any purchase from me.

"The Monody[2] was written by request of Mr. Kinnaird for the theatre. I did as well as I could; but where I have not my choice I pretend to answer for nothing. Mr. Hobhouse and myself are just returned from a journey of lakes and mountains. We have been to the Grindelwald, and the Jungfrau, and stood on the summit of the Wengen Alp; and seen torrents of nine hundred feet in fall, and glaciers of all dimensions: we have heard shepherds' pipes, and avalanches, and looked on the clouds foaming up from the valleys below us, like the spray of the ocean of hell. Chamouni, and that which it inherits, we saw a month ago: but though Mont Blanc is higher, it is not equal in wildness to the Jungfrau, the Eighers, the Shreckhorn, and the Rose Glaciers.

"We set off for Italy next week. The road is within this month infested with bandits, but we must take our chance and such precautions as are requisite.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S.—My best remembrances to Mr. Gifford. Pray say all that can be said from me to him.

"I am sorry that Mr. Maturin did not like Phillips's picture. I thought it was reckoned a good one. If he had made the speech on the original, perhaps he would have been more readily forgiven by the proprietor and the painter of the portrait * * *."

LETTER 246. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Diodati, Sept. 30. 1816.

"I answered your obliging letters yesterday: to-day the Monody arrived with its *title*-page, which is, I presume, a separate publication. 'The request of a friend:'—

"'Obliged by hunger and request of friends.'

I will request you to expunge that same, unless you please to add, 'by a person of quality,' or 'of wit and honour about town.' Merely say, 'written to be spoken at Drury Lane.' To-morrow I dine at Copet. Saturday I strike tents for Italy. This evening, on the lake in my boat with Mr. Hobhouse, the pole which sustains the mainsail slipped in tacking, and struck me so violently on one of my legs (the *worst*, luckily) as to make me do a foolish thing, viz. to *faint*—a downright swoon; the thing must have

[1] [Lady Charlotte Hamilton, second daughter of Archibald, ninth Duke of Hamilton. She died in 1827.]

[2] A Monody on the Death of Sheridan, which was spoken at Drury Lane theatre. [See *Works*, p. 473.]

jarred some nerve or other, for the bone is not injured, and hardly painful (it is six hours since), and cost Mr. Hobhouse some apprehension and much sprinkling of water to recover me. The sensation was a very odd one: I never had but two such before, once from a cut on the head from a stone, several years ago, and once (long ago also) in falling into a great wreath of snow; — a sort of grey giddiness first, then nothingness, and a total loss of memory on beginning to recover. The last part is not disagreeable, if one did not find it again.

"You want the original MSS. Mr. Davies has the first fair copy in my own hand, and I have the rough composition here, and will send or save it for you, since you wish it.

"With regard to your new literary project, if any thing falls in the way which will, to the best of my judgment, suit you, I will send you what I can. At present I must lay by a little, having pretty well exhausted myself in what I have sent you. Italy or Dalmatia and another summer may, or may not, set me off again. I have no plans, and am nearly as indifferent what may come as where I go. I shall take Felicia Hemans' 'Restoration,' &c. with me; it is a good poem — very.

"Pray repeat my best thanks and remembrances to Mr. Gifford for all his trouble and good nature towards me.

"Do not fancy me laid up, from the beginning of this scrawl. I tell you the accident for want of better to say; but it is over, and I am only wondering what the deuce was the matter with me.

"I have lately been over all the Bernese Alps and their lakes. I think many of the scenes (some of which were not those usually frequented by the English) finer than Chamouni, which I visited some time before. I have been to Clarens again, and crossed the mountains behind it: of this tour I kept a short journal for my sister, which I sent yesterday in three letters. It is not all for perusal; but if you like to hear about the romantic part, she will, I dare say, show you what touches upon the rocks, &c.

"Christabel — I won't have any one sneer at Christabel: it is a fine wild poem.

"Madame de Stael wishes to see the Antiquary, and I am going to take it to her to-morrow. She has made Copet as agreeable as society and talent can make any place on earth. "Yours ever, "N."

From the Journal mentioned in the foregoing letter, I am enabled to give the following extracts: —

EXTRACTS FROM A JOURNAL.

"September 18. 1816.

"Yesterday, September 17th, I set out with Mr. Hobhouse on an excursion of some days to the mountains.

"September 17.

"Rose at five; left Diodati about seven, in one of the country carriages (a char-à-banc), our servants on horseback. Weather very fine; the lake calm and clear; Mont Blanc and the Aiguille of Argentières both very distinct; the borders of the lake beautiful. Reached Lausanne before sunset; stopped and slept at ——. Went to bed at nine: slept till five o'clock.

"September 18.

"Called by my courier; got up. Hobhouse walked on before. A mile from Lausanne the road overflowed by the lake; got on horseback and rode till within a mile of Vevay. The colt young, but went very well. Overtook Hobhouse, and resumed the carriage, which is an open one. Stopped at Vevay two hours (the second time I had visited it); walked to the church; view from the churchyard superb; within it General Ludlow's (the regicide's) monument — black marble — long inscription — Latin, but simple; he was an exile two-and-thirty years — one of King Charles's judges. Near him Broughton (who read King Charles's sentence to Charles Stuart) is buried, with a queer and rather canting, but still a republican, inscription. Ludlow's house shown; it retains still its inscription — 'Omne solum forti patria.' Walked down to the lake side; servants, carriage, saddle-horses — all set off and left us *plantés là*, by some mistake, and we walked on after them towards Clarens: Hobhouse ran on before, and overtook them at last. Arrived the second time (first time was by water) at Clarens. Went to Chillon through scenery worthy of I know not whom; went over the Castle of Chillon again. On our return met an English party in a carriage; a lady in it fast asleep — fast asleep in the most antinarcotic spot in the world — excellent! I remember, at Chamouni, in the very eyes of Mont Blanc, hearing another woman, English also, exclaim to her party 'Did you ever see any thing more *rural?*' — as if it was Highgate, or Hampstead, or Brompton, or Hayes, — 'Rural!' quotha. — Rocks, pines, torrents, glaciers, clouds, and summits of eternal snow far above them — and 'rural!'

"After a slight and short dinner we visited the Château de Clarens; an English

woman has rented it recently (it was not let when I saw it first); the roses are gone with their summer; the family out, but the servants desired us to walk over the interior of the mansion. Saw on the table of the saloon Blair's Sermons and somebody else's (I forget who's) sermons, and a set of noisy children. Saw all worth seeing, and then descended to the 'Bosquet de Julie,' &c. &c.; our guide full of Rousseau, whom he is eternally confounding with St. Preux, and mixing the man and the book. Went again as far as Chillon to revisit the little torrent from the hill behind it. Sunset reflected in the lake. Have to get up at five to-morrow to cross the mountains on horseback; carriage to be sent round; lodged at my old cottage — hospitable and comfortable; tired with a longish ride on the colt, and the subsequent jolting of the char-à-banc, and my scramble in the hot sun.

"Mem. The corporal who showed the wonders of Chillon was as drunk as Blucher, and (to my mind) as great a man; he was deaf also, and thinking every one else so, roared out the legends of the castle so fearfully that H. got out of humour. However, we saw things from the gallows to the dungeons (the *potence* and the *cachots*), and returned to Clarens with more freedom than belonged to the fifteenth century.

"September 19.

"Rose at five. Crossed the mountains to Montbovon on horseback, and on mules, and, by dint of scrambling, on foot also; the whole route beautiful as a dream, and now to me almost as indistinct. I am so tired; —for though healthy, I have not the strength I possessed but a few years ago. At Montbovon we breakfasted; afterwards, on a steep ascent dismounted; tumbled down; cut a finger open; the baggage also got loose and fell down a ravine, till stopped by a large tree; recovered baggage; horse tired and drooping; mounted mule. At the approach of the summit of Dent Jument [1] dismounted again with Hobhouse and all the party. Arrived at a lake in the very bosom of the mountains; left our quadrupeds with a shepherd, and ascended farther; came to some snow in patches, upon which my forehead's perspiration fell like rain, making the same dints as in a sieve; the chill of the wind and the snow turned me giddy, but I scrambled on and upwards. Hobhouse went to the highest pinnacle; I did not, but paused within a few yards (at an opening of the cliff). In coming down, the guide tumbled three times; I fell a laughing, and tumbled too — the descent luckily soft, though steep and slippery: Hobhouse also fell, but nobody hurt. The whole of the mountains superb. A shepherd on a very steep and high cliff playing upon his *pipe;* very different from *Arcadia*, where I saw the pastors with a long musket instead of a crook, and pistols in their girdles. Our Swiss shepherd's pipe was sweet, and his tune agreeable. I saw a cow strayed; am told that they often break their necks on and over the crags. Descended to Montbovon; pretty scraggy village, with a wild river and a wooden bridge. Hobhouse went to fish — caught one. Our carriage not come; our horses, mules, &c. knocked up; ourselves fatigued; but so much the better — I shall sleep.

"The view from the highest points of to-day's journey comprised on one side the greatest part of Lake Leman; on the other, the valleys and mountain of the Canton of Fribourg, and an immense plain, with the lakes of Neuchâtel and Morat, and all which the borders of the Lake of Geneva inherit; we had both sides of the Jura before us in one point of view, with Alps in plenty. In passing a ravine, the guide recommended strenuously a quickening of pace, as the stones fall with great rapidity and occasional damage; the advice is excellent, but, like most good advice, impracticable, the road being so rough that neither mules, nor mankind, nor horses, can make any violent progress. Passed without fractures or menace thereof.

"The music of the cow's bells (for their wealth, like the patriarchs', is cattle) in the pastures, which reach to a height far above any mountains in Britain, and the shepherds shouting to us from crag to crag, and playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery, realized all that I have ever heard or imagined of a pastoral existence [2]: — much more so than Greece or Asia Minor, for there we are a little too much of the sabre and musket order, and if there is a crook in one hand, you are sure to see a gun in the other: — but this was pure and unmixed — solitary, savage, and patriarchal. As we went, they played the

[1] Dent de Jaman.

[2] [——— "Hark! the note
The natural music of the mountain reed —
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable — pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes."
Manfred, act i. sc. 2. See *Works*, p. 179.]

'Ranz des Vaches'[1] and other airs, by way of farewell. I have lately repeopled my mind with nature."

" September 20.

Up at six; off at eight. The whole of this day's journey at an average of between from 2700 to 3000 feet above the level of the sea. This valley, the longest, narrowest, and considered the finest of the Alps, little traversed by travellers. Saw the bridge of La Roche. The bed of the river very low and deep, between immense rocks, and rapid as anger;— a man and mule said to have tumbled over without damage. The people looked free, and happy, and *rich* (which last implies neither of the former); the cows superb; a bull nearly leapt into the char-à-banc — 'agreeable companion in a post-chaise;' goats and sheep very thriving. A mountain with enormous glaciers to the right — the Klitzgerberg; further on, the Hockthorn — nice names — so soft! — *Stockhorn*, I believe, very lofty and scraggy, patched with snow only; no glaciers on it, but some good epaulettes of clouds.

"Passed the boundaries, out of Vaud and into Berne canton; French exchanged for bad German; the district famous for cheese, liberty, property, and no taxes. Hobhouse went to fish — caught none. Strolled to the river; saw boy and kid; kid followed him like a dog; kid could not get over a fence, and bleated piteously; tried myself to help kid, but nearly overset both self and kid into the river. Arrived here about six in the evening. Nine o'clock — going to bed; not tired to-day, but hope to sleep nevertheless."

" September 21.

"Off early. The valley of Simmenthal as before. Entrance to the plain of Thoun very narrow; high rocks, wooded to the top; river; new mountains, with fine glaciers. Lake of Thoun; extensive plain with a girdle of Alps. Walked down to the Château de Schadau; view along the lake; crossed the river in a boat rowed by women. Thoun a very pretty town. The whole day's journey Alpine and proud."

" September 22.

"Left Thoun in a boat, which carried us the length of the lake in three hours. The lake small; but the banks fine. Rocks down to the water's edge. Landed at Newhause; passed Interlachen; entered upon a range of scenes beyond all description or previous conception. Passed a rock; inscription — two brothers — one murdered the other; just the place for it. After a variety of windings came to an enormous rock. Arrived at the foot of the mountain (the Jungfrau, that is, the Maiden); glaciers; torrents; one of these torrents *nine hundred feet* in height of visible descent. Lodged at the curate's. Set out to see the valley; heard an avalanche fall, like thunder; glaciers enormous; storm came on, thunder, lightning, hail; all in perfection, and beautiful. I was on horseback; guide wanted to carry my cane; I was going to give it him, when I recollected that it was a sword-stick, and I thought the lightning might be attracted towards him; kept it myself; a good deal encumbered with it, as it was too heavy for a whip, and the horse was stupid, and stood with every other peal. Got in, not very wet, the cloak being stanch. Hobhouse wet through; Hobhouse took refuge in cottage; sent man, umbrella, and cloak (from the curate's when I arrived) after him. Swiss curate's house very good indeed, — much better than most English vicarages. It is immediately opposite the torrent I spoke of. The torrent is in shape curving over the rock, like the *tail* of a white horse streaming in the wind, such as it might be conceived would be that of the 'pale horse' on which Death is mounted in the Apocalypse.[2] It is neither mist nor water, but a something between both; its immense height (nine hundred feet) gives it a wave or curve, a spreading here or condensation there, wonderful and indescribable. I think, upon the whole, that this day has been better than any of this present excursion."

" September 23.

"Before ascending the mountain, went to the torrent (seven in the morning) again; the sun upon it forming a *rainbow* of the lower part of all colours, but principally purple and gold; the bow moving as you move; I never saw any thing like this; it

[1] ["An air so dear to the Swiss, that it was forbidden, under the pain of death, to play it to the troops; as it immediately drew tears from them, and made those who heard it desert, or die of what is called *la maladie du païs* — so ardent a desire did it excite to return to their country!"— ROUSSEAU.]

[2] It is interesting to observe the use to which he afterwards converted these hasty memorandums in his sublime drama of Manfred.

" It is not noon — the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular.
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The Giant steed, to be bestrode by Death
As told in the Apocalypse."

is only in the sunshine. Ascended the Wengen mountain; at noon reached a valley on the summit; left the horses, took off my coat, and went to the summit, seven thousand feet (English feet) above the level of the *sea*, and about five thousand above the valley we left in the morning. On one side, our view comprised the Jungfrau, with all her glaciers; then the Dent d'Argent, shining like truth; then the Little Giant (the Kleine Eigher); and the Great Giant (the Grosse Eigher), and last, not least, the Wetterhorn. The height of Jungfrau is 13,000 feet above the sea, 11,000 above the valley; she is the highest of this range. Heard the avalanches falling every five minutes nearly. From whence we stood, on the Wengen Alp, we had all these in view on one side; on the other, the clouds rose from the opposite valley, curling up perpendicular precipices like the foam of the ocean of hell, during a spring tide — it was white, and sulphury, and immeasurably deep in appearance. [1] The side we ascended was (of course) not of so precipitous a nature; but on arriving at the summit, we looked down upon the other side upon a boiling sea of cloud, dashing against the crags on which we stood (these crags on one side quite perpendicular). Stayed a quarter of an hour; begun to descend; quite clear from cloud on that side of the mountain. In passing the masses of snow, I made a snowball and pelted Hobhouse with it.

"Got down to our horses again; ate something; remounted; heard the avalanches still; came to a morass; Hobhouse dismounted to get over well; I tried to pass my horse over; the horse sunk up to the chin, and of course he and I were in the mud together; bemired, but not hurt; laughed, and rode on. Arrived at the Grindlewald; dined; mounted again, and rode to the higher glacier — like *a frozen hurricane*. [2] Starlight, beautiful, but a devil of a path! Never mind, got safe in; a little lightning; but the whole of the day as fine in point of weather as the day on which Paradise was made. Passed *whole woods of withered pines, all withered;* trunks stripped and barkless, branches lifeless; done by a single winter [3], — their appearance reminded me of me and my family."

"September 24.

"Set off at seven; up at five. Passed the black glacier, the mountain Wetterhorn on the right; crossed the Scheideck mountain; came to the *Rose* glacier, said to be the largest and finest in Switzerland. *I* think the Bossons glacier at Chamouni as fine; Hobhouse does not. Came to the Reichenbach waterfall, two hundred feet high; halted to rest the horses. Arrived in the valley of Overland; rain came on; drenched a little; only four hour's rain, however, in eight days. Came to the lake of Brientz, then to the town of Brientz; changed. In the evening, four Swiss peasant girls of Oberhasli came and sang the airs of their country; two of the voices beautiful — the tunes also; so wild and original, and at the same time of great sweetness. The singing is over; but below stairs I hear the notes of a fiddle, which bode no good to my night's rest; I shall go down and see the dancing."

"September 25.

"The whole town of Brientz were apparently gathered together in the rooms below; pretty music and excellent waltzing; none but peasants; the dancing much better than in England; the English can't waltz, never could, never will. One man with his pipe in his mouth, but danced as well as the others; some other dances in pairs and in fours, and very good. I went to bed, but the revelry continued below late and early. Brientz but a village. Rose early. Embarked on the lake of Brientz, rowed by the women in a long boat; presently we put to shore, and another woman jumped in. It seems it is the custom here for the boats to be *manned* by *women:* for of five men and three women in our bark, all the women took an oar, and but one man.

"Got to Interlachen in three hours; pretty lake; not so large as that of Thoun. Dined at Interlachen. Girl gave me some flowers, and made me a speech in German, of which I know nothing; I do not know whether the speech was pretty, but as the woman was, I hope so. Re-embarked on the lake of Thoun; fell asleep part of the way: sent our horses round; found people on the shore, blowing up a rock with gunpowder; they blew it up near our boat, only

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1 "Ye *avalanches*, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict. * * *
The mists boil up around the glaciers; *clouds*
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep hell!"
Manfred.

2 —— "O'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling *tempest*'s foam,
Frozen in a moment." *Manfred.*

3 —— "Like these *blasted pines,*
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless."
Ibid.

telling us a minute before ; — mere stupidity, but they might have broken our noddles. Got to Thoun in the evening ; the weather has been tolerable the whole day. But as the wild part of our tour is finished, it don't matter to us ; in all the desirable part, we have been most lucky in warmth and clearness of atmosphere."

" September 26.

" Being out of the mountains, my journal must be as flat as my journey. From Thoun to Berne, good road, hedges, villages, industry, property, and all sorts of tokens of insipid civilisation. From Berne to Fribourg ; different canton ; Catholics ; passed a field of battle ; Swiss beat the French in one of the late wars against the French republic. Bought a dog. The greater part of this tour has been on horseback, on foot, and on mule."

" September 28.

" Saw the tree planted in honour of the battle of Morat ; three hundred and forty years old ; a good deal decayed. Left Fribourg, but first saw the cathedral ; high tower. Overtook the baggage of the nuns of La Trappe, who are removing to Normandy ; afterwards a coach, with a quantity of nuns in it. Proceeded along the banks of the lake of Neuchâtel ; very pleasing and soft, but not so mountainous — at least, the Jura, not appearing so, after the Bernese Alps. Reached Yverdun in the dusk ; a long line of large trees on the border of the lake ; fine and sombre ; the auberge nearly full — a German princess and suite ; got rooms."

" September 29.

" Passed through a fine and flourishing country, but not mountainous. In the evening reached Aubonne (the entrance and bridge something like that of Durham), which commands by far the fairest view of the Lake of Geneva ; twilight ; the moon on the lake ; a grove on the height, and of very noble trees. Here Tavernier (the eastern traveller) bought (or built) the château, because the site resembled and equalled that of *Erivan*, a frontier city of Persia ; here he finished his voyages[1], and I this little excursion, — for I am within a few hours of Diodati, and have little more to see, and no more to say."

With the following melancholy passage this Journal concludes : —

" In the weather for this tour (of 13 days), I have been very fortunate — fortunate in a companion (Mr. H.) — fortunate in our prospects, and exempt from even the little petty accidents and delays which often render journeys in a less wild country disappointing. I was disposed to be pleased. I am a lover of nature and an admirer of beauty. I can bear fatigue and welcome privation, and have seen some of the noblest views in the world. But in all this — the recollection of bitterness, and more especially of recent and more home desolation, which must accompany me through life, have preyed upon me here ; and neither the music of the shepherd, the crashing of the avalanche, nor the torrent, the mountain, the glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty, and the power, and the glory, around, above, and beneath me."

[1] [This is not correct. To retrieve his finances, which had suffered through the misconduct of a nephew, Tavernier set out once more on his travels in 1689. He succeeded in reaching Moscow, but died there in the summer of that year. His " Travels through Turkey into Persia and the East Indies for the Space of Forty Years" were published in 1678. They will be found in Harris's Collection.]

CHAPTER XXVII.

1816.

GENEVA. — ACQUAINTANCE WITH SHELLEY. — EXCURSIONS ON THE LAKE. — POLIDORI. — DIODATI. — GHOST-STORIES. — SQUALL OFF MEILLERIE. — OUCHI. — COMPOSITION OF THE PRISONER OF CHILLON. — VISIT TO COPET. — UNSUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATION FOR A RECONCILIATION. — COMPOSITION OF DARKNESS. — THE DREAM. — THE INCANTATION. — COULD I REMOUNT. — AND STANZAS TO AUGUSTA. — LETTERS TO MURRAY. — MILAN. — VERONA. — ANECDOTES.

Among the inmates of Sécheron, on his arrival at Geneva, Lord Byron had found Mr. and Mrs. Shelley, and a female relative of the latter, who had about a fortnight before taken up their residence at this hotel. It was the first time that Lord Byron and Mr. Shelley ever met ; though, long before, when the latter was quite a youth, — being the younger of the two by four or five years, — he had sent to the noble poet a copy of his Queen Mab, accompanied by a letter, in which, after detailing at full length all the accusations he had heard brought against his character, he added, that, should these charges not have been true, it would make him happy to be honoured with his acquaint-

ance. The book alone, it appears, reached its destination, — the letter having miscarried, — and Lord Byron was known to have expressed warm admiration of the opening lines of the poem.

There was, therefore, on their present meeting at Geneva, no want of disposition towards acquaintance on either side, and an intimacy almost immediately sprung up between them. Among the tastes common to both, that for boating was not the least strong; and in this beautiful region they had more than ordinary temptations to indulge in it. Every evening, during their residence under the same roof at Sécheron, they embarked, accompanied by the ladies and Polidori, on the Lake; and to the feelings and fancies inspired by these excursions, which were not unfrequently prolonged into the hours of moonlight, we are indebted for some of those enchanting stanzas[1], in which the poet has given way to his passionate love of Nature so fervidly.

"There breathes a living fragrance from the shore
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drips the light drop of the suspended oar.
* * * * * * * * *
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy — for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away."

A person who was of these parties has thus described to me one of their evenings: — "When the *bise* or north-east wind blows, the waters of the Lake are driven towards the town, and with the stream of the Rhone, which sets strongly in the same direction, combine to make a very rapid current towards the harbour. Carelessly, one evening, we had yielded to its course, till we found ourselves almost driven on the piles; and it required all our rowers' strength to master the tide. The waves were high and inspiriting — we were all animated by our contest with the elements. 'I will sing you an Albanian song,' cried Lord Byron; 'now, be sentimental and give me all your attention.' It was a strange, wild howl that he gave forth; but such as, he declared, was an exact imitation of the savage Albanian mode, — laughing, the while, at our disappointment, who had expected a wild Eastern melody."

Sometimes the party landed, for a walk upon the shore, and on such occasions, Lord Byron would loiter behind the rest, lazily trailing his sword-stick along, and moulding, as he went, his thronging thoughts into shape. Often too, when in the boat, he would lean abstractedly over the side, and surrender himself up, in silence, to the same absorbing task.

The conversation of Mr. Shelley, from the extent of his poetic reading, and the strange, mystic speculations into which his system of philosophy led him, was of a nature strongly to arrest and interest the attention of Lord Byron, and to turn him away from worldly associations and topics into more abstract and untrodden ways of thought. As far as contrast, indeed, is an enlivening ingredient of such intercourse, it would be difficult to find two persons more formed to whet each other's faculties by discussion, as on few points of common interest between them did their opinions agree; and that this difference had its root deep in the conformation of their respective minds needs but a glance through the rich, glittering labyrinth of Mr. Shelley's pages to assure us.

In Lord Byron, the real was never forgotten in the fanciful. However Imagination had placed her whole realm at his disposal, he was no less a man of this world than a ruler of hers; and, accordingly, through the airiest and most subtile creations of his brain still the life-blood of truth and reality circulates. With Shelley it was far otherwise; — his fancy (and he had sufficient for a whole generation of poets) was the medium through which he saw all things, his facts as well as his theories; and not only the greater part of his poetry, but the political and philosophical speculations in which he indulged, were all distilled through the same over-refining and unrealising alembic. Having started as a teacher and reformer of the world, at an age when he could know nothing of the world but from fancy, the persecution he met with on the threshold of this boyish enterprise but confirmed him in his first paradoxical views of human ills and their remedies; and, instead of waiting to take lessons of authority and experience, he, with a courage, admirable had it been but wisely directed, made war upon both. From this sort of self-willed start in the world, an impulse was at once given to his opinions and powers directly contrary, it would seem, to their natural bias, and from which his life was too short to allow him time to recover. With a mind, by nature, fervidly pious, he yet refused to acknowledge a Supreme Providence, and substituted some airy abstraction of "Universal Love" in its place. An aristocrat by birth, and, as I understand, also in appearance and manners, he was yet a leveller in politics, and to such an Utopian extent as to be, seriously, the advocate of a com-

[1] Childe Harold, canto 3.

munity of property. With a delicacy and even romance of sentiment, which lends such grace to some of his lesser poems, he could notwithstanding contemplate a change in the relations of the sexes, which would have led to results fully as gross as his arguments for it were fastidious and refined; and though benevolent and generous to an extent that seemed to exclude all idea of selfishness, he yet scrupled not, in the pride of system, to disturb wantonly the faith of his fellow-men, and, without substituting any equivalent good in its place, to rob the wretched of a hope, which, even if false, would be worth all this world's best truths.

Upon no point were the opposite tendencies of the two friends, — to long-established opinions and matter of fact on one side, and to all that was most innovating and visionary on the other, — more observable than in their notions on philosophical subjects; Lord Byron being, with the great bulk of mankind, a believer in the existence of Matter and Evil, while Shelley so far refined upon the theory of Berkeley as not only to resolve the whole of Creation into spirit, but to add also to this immaterial system some pervading principle, some abstract nonentity of Love and Beauty, of which — as a substitute, at least, for Deity — the philosophic bishop had never dreamed. On such subjects, and on poetry, their conversation generally turned; and, as might be expected, from Lord Byron's facility in receiving new impressions, the opinions of his companion were not altogether without some influence on his mind. Here and there, among those fine bursts of passion and description that abound in the third canto of Childe Harold, may be discovered traces of that mysticism of meaning, — that sublimity, losing itself in its own vagueness, which so much characterised the writings of his extraordinary friend; and in one of the notes we find Shelley's favourite Pantheism of Love thus glanced at: — "But this is not all: the feeling with which all around Clarens and the opposite rocks of Meillerie is invested, is of a still higher and more comprehensive order than the mere sympathy with individual passion; it is a sense of the existence of love in its most extended and sublime capacity, and of our own participation of its good and of its glory: it is the great principle of the universe, which is there more condensed, but not less manifested; and of which, though knowing ourselves a part, we lose our individuality, and mingle in the beauty of the whole."

Another proof of the ductility with which he fell into his new friend's tastes and predilections, appears in the tinge, if not something deeper, of the manner and cast of thinking of Mr. Wordsworth, which is traceable through so many of his most beautiful stanzas. Being naturally, from his love of the abstract and imaginative, an admirer of the great poet of the Lakes, Mr. Shelley omitted no opportunity of bringing the beauties of his favourite writer under the notice of Lord Byron; and it is not surprising that, once persuaded into a fair perusal, the mind of the noble poet should — in spite of some personal and political prejudices which unluckily survived this short access of admiration, — not only feel the influence, but, in some degree, even reflect the hues of one of the very few real and original poets that this age (fertile as it is in rhymers *quales ego et Cluvienus*) has had the glory of producing.

When Polidori was of their party, (which, till he found attractions elsewhere, was generally the case,) their more elevated subjects of conversation were almost always put to flight by the strange sallies of this eccentric young man, whose vanity made him a constant butt for Lord Byron's sarcasm and merriment. The son of a highly respectable Italian gentleman, who was in early life, I understand, the secretary of Alfieri, Polidori seems to have possessed both talents and dispositions which, had he lived, might have rendered him a useful member of his profession and of society. At the time, however, of which we are speaking, his ambition of distinction far outwent both his powers and opportunities of attaining it. His mind, accordingly, between ardour and weakness, was kept in a constant hectic of vanity, and he seems to have alternately provoked and amused his noble employer, leaving him seldom any escape from anger but in laughter. Among other pretensions, he had set his heart upon shining as an author; and one evening at Mr. Shelley's, producing a tragedy of his own writing, insisted that they should undergo the operation of hearing it. To lighten the infliction, Lord Byron took upon himself the task of reader; and the whole scene, from the description I have heard of it, must have been not a little trying to gravity. In spite of the jealous watch kept upon every countenance by the author, it was impossible to withstand the smile lurking in the eye of the reader, whose only resource against the outbreak of his own laughter lay in lauding, from time to time, most vehemently, the sublimity of the verses; — particularly some that began "'Tis thus the goiter'd idiot of the Alps," — and then adding, at the close of every such eulogy, "I assure you, when I was in the Drury Lane Com-

mittee, much worse things were offered to us."

After passing a fortnight under the same roof with Lord Byron at Sécheron, Mr. and Mrs. Shelley removed to a small house on the Mont-Blanc side of the Lake, within about ten minutes' walk of the villa which their noble friend had taken, upon the high banks, called Belle Rive, that rose immediately behind them. During the fortnight that Lord Byron outstaid them at Sécheron, though the weather had changed and was become windy and cloudy, he every evening crossed the Lake, with Polidori, to visit them; and "as he returned again (says my informant) over the darkened waters, the wind, from far across, bore us his voice singing your Tyrolese Song of Liberty, which I then first heard, and which is to me inextricably linked with his remembrance."[1]

In the mean time, Polidori had become jealous of the growing intimacy of his noble patron with Shelley; and the plan which he now understood them to have formed of making a tour of the Lake without him completed his mortification. In the soreness of his feelings on this subject he indulged in some intemperate remonstrances, which Lord Byron indignantly resented; and the usual bounds of courtesy being passed on both sides, the dismissal of Polidori appeared, even to himself, inevitable. With this prospect, which he considered nothing less than ruin, before his eyes, the poor young man was, it seems, on the point of committing that fatal act which, two or three years afterwards, he actually did perpetrate. Retiring to his own room, he had already drawn forth the poison from his medicine chest, and was pausing to consider whether he should write a letter before he took it, when Lord Byron (without, however, the least suspicion of his intention), tapped at the door and entered, with his hand held forth in sign of reconciliation. The sudden revulsion was too much for poor Polidori, who burst into tears; and, in relating all the circumstances of the occurrence afterwards, he declared that nothing could exceed the gentle kindness of Lord Byron in soothing his mind and restoring him to composure.

Soon after this the noble poet removed to Diodati. He had, on his first coming to Geneva, with the good-natured view of introducing Polidori into company, gone to several Genevese parties; but, this task performed, he retired altogether from society till late in the summer, when, as we have seen, he visited Copet. His means were at this time very limited; and though he lived by no means parsimoniously, all unnecessary expenses were avoided in his establishment. The young physician had been, at first, a source of much expense to him, being in the habit of hiring a carriage, at a louis a day (Lord Byron not then keeping horses), to take him to his evening parties; and it was some time before his noble patron had the courage to put this luxury down.

The liberty, indeed, which this young person allowed himself was, on one occasion, the means of bringing an imputation upon the poet's hospitality and good breeding, which, like every thing else, true or false, tending to cast a shade upon his character, was for some time circulated with the most industrious zeal. Without any authority from the noble owner of the mansion, he took upon himself to invite some Genevese gentlemen (M. Pictet, and, I believe, M. Bonstetten) to dine at Diodati; and the punishment which Lord Byron thought it right to inflict upon him for such freedom was, "as he had invited the guests, to leave him also to entertain them." This step, though merely a consequence of the physician's indiscretion, it was not difficult, of course, to convert into a serious charge of caprice and rudeness against the host himself.

By such repeated instances of thoughtlessness (to use no harsher term), it is not wonderful that Lord Byron should at last be driven into a feeling of distaste towards his medical companion, of whom he one day remarked, that "he was exactly the kind of person to whom, if he fell overboard, one would hold out a straw, to know if the adage be true that drowning men catch at straws."

A few more anecdotes of this young man, while in the service of Lord Byron, may, as throwing light upon the character of the latter, be not inappropriately introduced. While the whole party were, one day, out boating, Polidori, by some accident, in rowing, struck Lord Byron violently on the knee-pan with his oar; and the latter, without speaking, turned his face away to hide the pain. After a moment he said, "Be so kind, Polidori, another time, to take more care, for you hurt me very much."—"I am glad of it," answered the other; "I am glad to see you can suffer pain." In a calm suppressed tone, Lord Byron replied, "Let me advise you, Polidori, when you, another time, hurt any one, not to express your satisfaction. People don't like to be told that those who give them pain are glad of it; and they cannot always com-

[1] ["The song of war shall echo through our mountains,
Till not one hateful link remains
Of slavery's lingering chains—
Till not one tyrant tread our plains,
Nor traitor lip pollute our fountains," &c.]

mand their anger. It was with some difficulty that I refrained from throwing you into the water; and, but for Mrs. Shelley's presence, I should probably have done some such rash thing." This was said without ill temper, and the cloud soon passed away.

Another time, when the lady just mentioned was, after a shower of rain, walking up the hill to Diodati, Lord Byron, who saw her from his balcony where he was standing with Polidori, said to the latter, "Now, you who wish to be gallant ought to jump down this small height, and offer your arm." Polidori chose the easiest part of the declivity, and leaped; — but the ground being wet, his foot slipped, and he sprained his ankle.[1] Lord Byron instantly helped to carry him in and procure cold water for the foot; and, after he was laid on the sofa, perceiving that he was uneasy, went up stairs himself (an exertion which his lameness made painful and disagreeable) to fetch a pillow for him. "Well, I did not believe you had so much feeling," was Polidori's gracious remark, which, it may be supposed, not a little clouded the noble poet's brow.

A dialogue which Lord Byron himself used to mention as having taken place between them, during their journey on the Rhine, is amusingly characteristic of both the persons concerned. "After all," said the physician, "what is there you can do that I cannot?"— "Why, since you force me to say," answered the other, "I think there are three things I can do which you cannot." Polidori defied him to name them. "I can," said Lord Byron, "swim across that river — I can snuff out that candle with a pistol-shot at the distance of twenty paces — and I have written a poem[2] of which 14,000 copies were sold in one day."

The jealous pique of the Doctor against Shelley was constantly breaking out; and on the occasion of some victory which the latter had gained over him in a sailing-match, he took it into his head that his antagonist had treated him with contempt; and went so far, in consequence, notwithstanding Shelley's known sentiments against duelling, as to proffer him a sort of challenge, at which Shelley, as might be expected, only laughed. Lord Byron, however, fearing that the vivacious physician might still further take advantage of this peculiarity of his friend, said to him, "Recollect, that though Shelley has some scruples about duelling, *I* have none; and shall be, at all times, ready to take his place."

At Diodati, his life was passed in the same regular round of habits and occupations into which, when left to himself, he always naturally fell; a late breakfast, then a visit to the Shelleys' cottage and an excursion on the Lake; — at five, dinner[3] (when he usually preferred being alone), and then, if the weather permitted, an excursion again. He and Shelley had joined in purchasing a boat, for which they gave twenty-five *louis*, — a small sailing vessel, fitted to stand the usual squalls of the climate, and, at that time, the only keeled boat on the Lake. When the weather did not allow of their excursions after dinner, — an occurrence not unfrequent during this very wet summer, — the inmates of the cottage passed their evenings at Diodati; and, when the rain rendered it inconvenient for them to return home, remained there to sleep. "We often," says one, who was not the least ornamental of the party, "sat up in conversation till the morning light. There was never any lack of subjects, and, grave or gay, we were always interested."

During a week of rain at this time, having amused themselves with reading German ghost-stories, they agreed, at last, to write something in imitation of them. "You and I," said Lord Byron to Mrs. Shelley, "will publish ours together." He then began his tale of the Vampire; and, having the whole arranged in his head, repeated to them a sketch of the story[4] one evening, — but, from the narrative being in prose, made but little progress in filling up his outline. The most memorable result, indeed, of their story-telling compact, was Mrs. Shelley's wild and powerful romance of Frankenstein, — one of those original conceptions that take hold of the public mind at once, and for ever.

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[1] To this lameness of Polidori, one of the preceding letters of Lord Byron alludes.

[2] The Corsair.

[3] His system of diet here was regulated by an abstinence almost incredible. A thin slice of bread, with tea, at breakfast — a light, vegetable dinner, with a bottle or two of Seltzer water, tinged with vin de Grave, and in the evening a cup of green tea, without milk or sugar, formed the whole of his sustenance. The pangs of hunger he appeased by privately chewing tobacco and smoking cigars.

[4] From his remembrance of this sketch, Polidori afterwards vamped up his strange novel of the Vampire, which, under the supposition of its being Lord Byron's, was received with such enthusiasm in France. It would, indeed, not a little deduct from our value of foreign fame, if, what some French writers have asserted be true, that the appearance of this extravagant novel among our neighbours first attracted their attention to the genius of Byron.

Towards the latter end of June, as we have seen in one of the preceding letters, Lord Byron, accompanied by his friend Shelley, made a tour in his boat round the Lake, and visited, "with the Héloise before him," all those scenes around Meillerie and Clarens, which have become consecrated for ever by ideal passion, and by that power which Genius alone possesses, of giving such life to its dreams as to make them seem realities. In the squall off Meillerie, which he mentions, their danger was considerable.[1] In the expectation, every moment, of being obliged to swim for his life, Lord Byron had already thrown off his coat, and, as Shelley was no swimmer, insisted upon endeavouring, by some means, to save him. This offer, however, Shelley positively refused; and seating himself quietly upon a locker, and grasping the rings at each end firmly in his hands, declared his determination to go down in that position, without a struggle.[2]

Subjoined to that interesting little work, the "Six Weeks' Tour," there is a letter by Shelley himself, giving an account of this excursion round the Lake, and written with all the enthusiasm such scenes should inspire. In describing a beautiful child they saw at the village of Nerni, he says, "My companion gave him a piece of money, which he took without speaking, with a sweet smile of easy thankfulness, and then with an unembarrassed air turned to his play." There were, indeed, few things Lord Byron more delighted in than to watch beautiful children at play; — "many a lovely Swiss child (says a person who saw him daily at this time) received crowns from him as the reward of their grace and sweetness."

Speaking of their lodgings at Nerni, which were gloomy and dirty, Mr. Shelley says, "On returning to our inn, we found that the servant had arranged our rooms, and deprived them of the greater portion of their former disconsolate appearance. They reminded my companion of Greece: — it was five years, he said, since he had slept in such beds."

Luckily for Shelley's full enjoyment of these scenes, he had never before happened to read the Héloise; and though his companion had long been familiar with that romance, the sight of the region itself, the "birth-place of deep Love[3]," every spot of which seemed instinct with the passion of the story, gave to the whole a fresh and actual existence in his mind. Both were under the spell of the Genius of the place, — both full of emotion; and as they walked silently through the vineyards that were once the "bosquet de Julie," Lord Byron suddenly exclaimed, "Thank God, Polidori is not here."

That the glowing stanzas suggested to him by this scene were written upon the spot itself appears almost certain, from the letter addressed to Mr. Murray on his way back to Diodati, in which he announces the third canto as complete, and consisting of 117 stanzas. At Ouchy, near Lausanne, — the place from which that letter is dated — he and his friend were detained two days, in a small inn, by the weather: and it was there, in that short interval, that he wrote his "Prisoner of Chillon," adding one more deathless association to the already immortalised localities of the Lake.

On his return from this excursion to Diodati, an occasion was afforded for the gratification of his jesting propensities, by the avowal of the young physician that — he had fallen in love. On the evening of this tender confession they both appeared at Shelley's cottage — Lord Byron, in the highest and most boyish spirits, rubbing his hands as he walked about the room, and in that utter incapacity of retention which was one of his foibles, making jesting

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[1] "The wind (says Lord Byron's fellow-voyager) gradually increased in violence until it blew tremendously; and, as it came from the remotest extremity of the Lake, produced waves of a frightful height, and covered the whole surface with a chaos of foam. One of our boatmen, who was a dreadfully stupid fellow, persisted in holding the sail at a time when the boat was on the point of being driven under water by the hurricane. On discovering this error, he let it entirely go, and the boat for a moment refused to obey the helm; in addition, the rudder was so broken as to render the management of it very difficult; one wave fell in, and then another."

[2] "I felt, in this near prospect of death (says Mr. Shelley), a mixture of sensations, among which terror entered, though but subordinately. My feelings would have been less painful had I been alone; but I knew that my companion would have attempted to save me, and I was overcome with humiliation, when I thought that his life might have been risked to preserve mine. When we arrived at St. Gingoux, the inhabitants, who stood on the shore, unaccustomed to see a vessel as frail as ours, and fearing to venture at all on such a sea, exchanged looks of wonder and congratulation with our boatmen, who, as well as ourselves, were well pleased to set foot on shore."

[3] ["Clarens! sweet Clarens! birth-place of deep Love,
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above
The very glaciers have his colour caught,
And sunset into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks." *Childe Harold*, c. 3. st. 99.]

allusions to the secret he had just heard. The brow of the Doctor darkened as this pleasantry went on, and, at last, he angrily accused Lord Byron of hardness of heart. "I never," said he, "met with a person so unfeeling." This sally, though the poet had evidently brought it upon himself, annoyed him most deeply. "Call *me* cold-hearted — *me* insensible!" he exclaimed, with manifest emotion — "as well might you say that glass is not brittle, which has been cast down a precipice, and lies dashed to pieces at the foot!"

In the month of July he paid a visit to Copet, and was received by the distinguished hostess with a cordiality the more sensibly felt by him as, from his personal unpopularity at this time, he had hardly ventured to count upon it.[1] In her usual frank style, she took him to task upon his matrimonial conduct — but in a way that won upon his mind, and disposed him to yield to her suggestions. He must endeavour, she told him, to bring about a reconciliation with his wife, and must submit to contend no longer with the opinion of the world. In vain did he quote her own motto to Delphine, "Un homme peut braver, une femme doit se succomber aux opinions du monde;" — her reply was, that all this might be very well to say, but that, in real life, the duty and necessity of yielding belonged also to the man. Her eloquence, in short, so far succeeded, that he was prevailed upon to write a letter to a friend in England, declaring himself still willing to be reconciled to Lady Byron, — a concession not a little startling to those who had so often, lately, heard him declare that, "having done all in his power to persuade Lady Byron to return, and with this view put off as long as he could signing the deed of separation, that step being once taken, they were now divided for ever."

Of the particulars of this brief negotiation that ensued upon Madame de Stael's suggestion, I have no very accurate remembrance; but there can be little doubt that its failure, after the violence he had done his own pride in the overture, was what first infused any mixture of resentment or bitterness into the feelings hitherto entertained by him throughout these painful differences. He had, indeed, since his arrival in Geneva, invariably spoken of his lady with kindness and regret, imputing the course she had taken, in leaving him, not to herself but others, and assigning whatever little share of blame he would allow her to bear in the transaction to the simple and, doubtless, true cause — her not at all understanding him. "I have no doubt," he would sometimes say, "that she really did believe me to be mad."

Another resolution connected with his matrimonial affairs, in which he often, at this time, professed his fixed intention to persevere, was that of never allowing himself to touch any part of his wife's fortune. Such a sacrifice, there is no doubt, would have been, in his situation, delicate and manly; but though the natural bent of his disposition led him to *make* the resolution, he wanted, — what few, perhaps, could have attained, — the fortitude to *keep* it.

The effects of the late struggle on his mind, in stirring up all its resources and energies, was visible in the great activity of his genius during the whole of this period, and the rich variety, both in character and colouring, of the works with which it teemed. Besides the third canto of Childe Harold and the Prisoner of Chillon, he produced also his two poems, "Darkness" and "The Dream," the latter of which cost him many a tear in writing, — being, indeed, the most mournful, as well as picturesque, "story of a wandering life" that ever came from the pen and heart of man. Those verses, too, entitled "The Incantation," which he introduced afterwards, without any connection with the subject, into Manfred, were also (at least, the less bitter portion of them) the production of this period; and as they were written soon after the last fruitless attempt at reconciliation, it is needless to say who was in his thoughts while he penned some of the opening stanzas.

"Though thy slumber must be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

"Though thou see'st me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye,
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;

[1] In the account of this visit to Copet in his Memoranda, he spoke in high terms of the daughter of his hostess, the present Duchess de Broglie; and in noticing how much she appeared to be attached to her husband, remarked that "nothing was more pleasing than to see the developement of the domestic affections in a very young woman." Of Madame de Stael, in that Memoir, he spoke thus: — "Madame de Stael was a good woman at heart and the cleverest at bottom, but spoilt by a wish to be — she knew not what. In her own house she was amiable; in any other person's, you wished her gone and in her own again."

And when, in that secret dread,
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal."

Besides the unfinished "Vampire," he began also, at this time, another romance in prose, founded upon the story of the Marriage of Belphegor, and intended to shadow out his own matrimonial fate. The wife of this satanic personage he described much in the same spirit that pervades his delineation of Donna Inez in the first canto of Don Juan. While engaged, however, in writing this story, he heard from England that Lady Byron was ill, and, his heart softening at the intelligence, he threw the manuscript into the fire. So constantly were the good and evil principles of his nature conflicting for mastery over him.[1]

The two following Poems, so different from each other in their character, — the first prying with an awful scepticism into the darkness of another world, and the second breathing all that is most natural and tender in the affections of this, — were also written at this time, and have never before been published.

"EXTRACT FROM AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.

"Could I remount the river of my years
To the first fountain of our smiles and tears,
I would not trace again the stream of hours
Between their outworn banks of wither'd flowers,
But bid it flow as now — until it glides
Into the number of the nameless tides. * * *
What is this Death? — a quiet of the heart?
The whole of that of which we are a part?
For Life is but a vision — what I see
Of all which lives alone is life to me,
And being so — the absent are the dead,
Who haunt us from tranquillity, and spread
A dreary shroud around us, and invest
With sad remembrances our hours of rest.
"The absent are the dead — for they are cold,
And ne'er can be what once we did behold;
And they are changed, and cheerless, — or if yet
The unforgotten do not all forget,
Since thus divided — equal must it be
If the deep barrier be of earth, or sea:
It may be both — but one day end it must
In the dark union of insensate dust.

"The under-earth inhabitants — are they
But mingled millions decomposed to clay?
The ashes of a thousand ages spread
Wherever man has trodden or shall tread?
Or do they in their silent cities dwell
Each in his incommunicative cell?
Or have they their own language? and a sense
Of breathless being? — darken'd and intense
As midnight in her solitude? — Oh Earth!
Where are the past? — and wherefore had they birth?
The dead are thy inheritors — and we
But bubbles on thy surface; and the key
Of thy profundity is in the grave,
The ebon portal of thy peopled cave,
Where I would walk in spirit, and behold
Our elements resolved to things untold,
And fathom hidden wonders, and explore
The essence of great bosoms now no more." * *

"TO AUGUSTA.

"My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine.
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
Go where I will, to me thou art the same —
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny, —
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

"The first were nothing — had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,
And mine is not the wish to make them less.
A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
Reversed for him our grandsire's [2] fate of yore, —
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

"If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlook'd or unforeseen,
I have sustain'd my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen
My errors with defensive paradox;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

"Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being gave me that which marr'd
The gift, — a fate, or will that walk'd astray;
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

"Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have roll'd

[1] Upon the same occasion, indeed, he wrote some verses in a spirit not quite so generous, of which a few of the opening lines is all I shall give: —

"And thou wert sad — yet I was not with thee!
And thou wert sick — and yet I was not near.
Methought that Joy and Health alone could be
Where I was *not*, and pain and sorrow here.
And is it thus? — it is as I foretold,
And shall be more so: — " &c. &c.

[See *Works*, p. 472.]

[2] "Admiral Byron was remarkable for never making a voyage without a tempest. He was known to the sailors by the facetious name of 'Foul-weather Jack.'

"But, though it were tempest-tost,
Still his bark could not be lost.

He returned safely from the wreck of the Wager (in Anson's Voyage), and subsequently circumnavigated the world, many years after, as commander of a similar expedition." [See BYRONIANA.]

Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away:
Something — I knew not what — does still uphold
A spirit of slight patience; not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

"Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
Within me, — or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur, —
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul refer,
And with light armour we may learn to bear,)
Have taught me a strange quiet, which was not
The chief companion of a calmer lot.

"I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I could think I see
Some living thing to love — but none like thee.

"Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
A fund for contemplation; — to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date;
But something worthier do such scenes inspire:
Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most desire,
And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

"Oh that thou wert but with me! — but I grow
The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret;
There may be others which I less may show; —
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my alter'd eye.

"I did remind thee of our own dear lake,[1]
By the old hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;
Though, like all things which I have loved, they are
Resign'd for ever, or divided far.

"The world is all before me; I but ask
Of Nature that with which she will comply —
It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister — till I look again on thee.

"I can reduce all feelings but this one;
And that I would not; — for at length I see
Such scenes as those wherein my life begun.
The earliest — even the only paths for me —
Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be;
The passions which have torn me would have slept:
I had not suffer'd, and *thou* hadst not wept.

"With false Ambition what had I to do?
Little with Love, and least of all with Fame;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make — a name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
But all is over — I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

"And for the future, this world's future may
From me demand but little of my care;
I have outlived myself by many a day;
Having survived so many things that were;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
Of life which might have fill'd a century,
Before its fourth in time had pass'd me by.

"And for the remnant which may be to come
I am content; and for the past I feel
Not thankless, — for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings farther. — Nor shall I conceal
That with all this I still can look around
And worship Nature with a thought profound.

"For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
I know myself secure, as thou in mine:
We were and are — I am, even as thou art —
Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
It is the same, together or apart,
From life's commencement to its slow decline
We are entwined — let death come slow or fast,
The tie which bound the first endures the last!"

In the month of August, Mr. M. G. Lewis arrived to pass some time with him; and he was soon after visited by Mr. Richard Sharp, of whom he makes such honourable mention in the Journal already given, and with whom, as I have heard this gentleman say, it now gave him evident pleasure to converse about their common friends in England. Among those who appeared to have left the strongest impressions of interest and admiration on his mind was (as easily will be believed by all who know this distinguished person) Sir James Mackintosh.

Soon after the arrival of his friends, Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. S. Davies, he set out, as we have seen, with the former on a tour through the Bernese Alps, — after accomplishing which journey, about the beginning of October he took his departure, accompanied by the same gentleman, for Italy.

The first letter of the following series was, it will be seen, written a few days before he left Diodati.

[1] The lake of Newstead Abbey. [Thus described in Don Juan:—

"Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
By a river, which its soften'd way did take
In currents through the calmer water spread
Around: the wild fowl nestled in the brake
And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed;
The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
With their green faces fixed upon the flood."
Canto xiii. st. 57.]

LETTER 247. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Diodati, Oct. 5. 1816.

"Save me a copy of 'Buck's Richard III.' republished by Longman; but do not send out more books, — I have too many.

"The 'Monody' is in too many paragraphs, which makes it unintelligible to me; if any one else understands it in the present form, they are wiser: however, as it cannot be rectified till my return, and has been already published, even publish it on in the collection — it will fill up the place of the omitted epistle.

"Strike out 'by request of a friend,' which is sad trash, and must have been done to make it ridiculous.

"Be careful in the printing the stanzas beginning,

"'Though the day of my destiny,' &c.

which I think well of as a composition.

"'The Antiquary' is not the best of the three, but much above all the last twenty years, saving its elder brothers. Holcroft's Memoirs are valuable as showing strength of endurance in the man, which is worth more than all the talent in the world.

"And so you have been publishing 'Margaret of Anjou' and an Assyrian tale, and refusing W. W.'s Waterloo [1], and the 'Hue and Cry.' I know not which most to admire, your rejections or acceptances. I believe that *prose* is, after all, the most reputable, for certes, if one could foresee — but I won't go on — that is, with this sentence; but poetry is, I fear, incurable. God help me! if I proceed in this scribbling, I shall have frittered away my mind before I am thirty; but it is at times a real relief to me. For the present — good evening."

LETTER 248. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Martigny, October 9. 1816.

"Thus far on my way to Italy. We have just passed the 'Pisse-Vache' (one of the finest torrents in Switzerland) in time to view the iris which the sun flings along it before noon.

"I have written to you twice lately. Mr. Davies, I hear, is arrived. He brings the original MS. which you wished to see. Recollect that the printing is to be from that which Mr. Shelley brought; and recollect, also, that the concluding stanzas of Childe Harold (those to my *daughter*) which I had not made up my mind whether to publish or not when they were *first* written (as you will see marked on the margin of the first copy), I had (and have) fully determined to publish with the rest of the canto, as in the copy which you received by Mr. Shelley, before I sent it to England.

"Our weather is very fine, which is more than the summer has been. — At Milan I shall expect to hear from you. Address either to Milan, *poste restante*, or by way of Geneva, to the care of Monsr. Hentsch, Banquier. I write these few lines in case my other letter should not reach you: I trust one of them will.

"P. S.—My best respects and regards to Mr. Gifford. Will you tell him it may perhaps be as well to put a short note to that part relating to *Clarens*, merely to say, that of course the description does not refer to that particular spot so much as to the command of scenery round it? I do not know that this is necessary, and leave it to Mr. G.'s choice, as my editor, — if he will allow me to call him so at this distance."

LETTER 249. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Milan, October 15. 1816.

"I hear that Mr. Davies has arrived in England, — but that of some letters, &c., committed to his care by Mr. H., only *half* have been delivered. This intelligence naturally makes me feel a little anxious for mine, and amongst them for the MS., which I wished to have compared with the one sent by me through the hands of Mr. Shelley. I trust that *it* has arrived safely, — and indeed not less so, that some little crystals, &c., from Mont Blanc, for my daughter and my nieces, have reached their address. Pray have the goodness to ascertain from Mr. Davies that no accident (by custom-house or loss) has befallen them, and satisfy me on this point at your earliest convenience.

"If I recollect rightly, you told me that Mr. Gifford had kindly undertaken to correct the press (at my request) during my absence — at least I hope so. It will add to my many obligations to that gentleman.

"I wrote to you, on my way here, a short note, dated Martigny. Mr. Hobhouse and myself arrived here a few days ago, by the Simplon and Lago Maggiore route. Of course we visited the Borromean Islands, which are fine, but too artificial. The Simplon is magnificent in its nature and its art, — both God and man have done wonders, — to say nothing of the devil, who must certainly have had a hand (or a hoof) in some of the rocks and ravines through and over which the works are carried.

[1] ["Waterloo, and other Poems, by J. Wedderburne Webster, Esq." See Quarterly Review, vol. xv. p. 345.]

"Milan is striking — the cathedral superb. The city altogether reminds me of Seville, but a little inferior. We had heard divers bruits, and took precautions on the road, near the frontier, against some 'many worthy fellows (*i. e.* felons) that were out,' and had ransacked some preceding travellers, a few weeks ago, near Sesto, — or Cesto, I forget which, — of cash and raiment, besides putting them in bodily fear, and lodging about twenty slugs in the retreating part of a courier belonging to Mr. Hope. But we were not molested, and I do not think in any danger, — except of making mistakes in the way of cocking and priming whenever we saw an old house, or an ill-looking thicket, and now and then suspecting the 'true men,' who have very much the appearance of the thieves of other countries. What the thieves may look like, I know not, nor desire to know; for it seems they come upon you in bodies of thirty ('in buckram and Kendal green') at a time, so that voyagers have no great chance. It is something like poor dear Turkey in that respect, but not so good, for there you can have as great a body of rogues to match the regular banditti; but here the gens d'armes are said to be no great things; and as for one's own people, one can't carry them about like Robinson Crusoe with a gun on each shoulder.

"I have been to the Ambrosian library — it is a fine collection — full of MSS. edited and unedited. I enclose you a list of the former recently published: these are matters for your literati. For me, in my simple way, I have been most delighted with a correspondence of letters, all original and amatory, between *Lucretia Borgia* and *Cardinal Bembo*, preserved there. I have pored over them and a lock of her hair, the prettiest and fairest imaginable — I never saw fairer — and shall go repeatedly to read the epistles over and over; and if I can obtain some of the hair by fair means, I shall try. I have already persuaded the librarian to promise me copies of the letters, and I hope he will not disappoint me. They are short, but very simple, sweet, and to the purpose; there are some copies of verses in Spanish also by her; the tress of her hair is long, and, as I said before, beautiful. The Brera gallery of paintings has some fine pictures, but nothing of a collection. Of painting I know nothing; but I like a Guercino — a picture of Abraham putting away Hagar and Ishmael — which seems to me natural and goodly. The Flemish school, such as I saw it in Flanders, I utterly detested, despised, and abhorred; it might be painting, but it was not nature; the Italian is pleasing, and their *ideal* very noble.

"The Italians I have encountered here are very intelligent and agreeable. In a few days I am to meet Monti. By the way, I have just heard an anecdote of Beccaria, who published such admirable things against the punishment of death. As soon as his book was out, his servant (having read it, I presume) stole his watch; and his master, while correcting the proofs of a second edition, did all he could to have him hanged by way of advertisement.

"I forgot to mention the triumphal arch begun by Napoleon, as a gate to this city. It is unfinished, but the part completed worthy of another age and the same country. The society here is very oddly carried on, — at the theatre, and the theatre only, — which answers to our opera. People meet there as at a rout, but in very small circles. From Milan I shall go to Venice. If you write, write to Geneva, as before — the letter will be forwarded. "Yours ever."

LETTER 250. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Milan, November 1. 1816.

"I have recently written to you rather frequently, but without any late answer. Mr. Hobhouse and myself set out for Venice in a few days; but you had better still address to me at Mr. Hentsch's, Banquier, Geneva; he will forward your letters.

"I do not know whether I mentioned to you some time ago, that I had parted with the Dr. Polidori a few weeks previous to my leaving Diodati. I know no great harm of him; but he had an alacrity of getting into scrapes, and was too young and heedless; and having enough to attend to in my own concerns, and without time to become his tutor, I thought it much better to give him his congé. He arrived at Milan some weeks before Mr. Hobhouse and myself. About a week ago, in consequence of a quarrel at the theatre with an Austrian officer, in which he was exceedingly in the wrong, he has contrived to get sent out of the territory, and is gone to Florence. I was not present, the pit having been the scene of altercation; but on being sent for from the Cavalier Breme's box, where I was quietly staring at the ballet, I found the man of medicine begirt with grenadiers, arrested by the guard, conveyed into the guard-room, where there was much swearing in several languages. They were going to keep him there for the night; but on my giving my name, and answering for his apparition next morning, he was permitted egress. Next day he had an order from the government to be gone in

twenty-four hours, and accordingly gone he is, some days ago. We did what we could for him, but to no purpose; and indeed he brought it upon himself, as far as I could learn, for I was not present at the squabble itself. I believe this is the real state of his case; and I tell it you because I believe things sometimes reach you in England in a false or exaggerated form. We found Milan very polite and hospitable[1], and have the same hopes of Verona and Venice. I have filled my paper. "Ever yours, &c."

LETTER 251. TO MR. MOORE.

"Verona, November 6. 1816.

"My dear Moore,

"Your letter, written before my departure from England, and addressed to me in London, only reached me recently. Since that period, I have been over a portion of that part of Europe which I had not already seen. About a month since, I crossed the Alps from Switzerland to Milan, which I left a few days ago, and am thus far on my way to Venice, where I shall probably winter. Yesterday I was on the shores of the Benacus, with his *fluctibus et fremitu*. Catullus's Sirmium has still its name and site, and is remembered for his sake: but the very heavy autumnal rains and mists prevented our quitting our route, (that is, Hobhouse and myself, who are at present voyaging together,) as it was better not to see it at all than to a great disadvantage.

"I found on the Benacus the same tradition of a city, still visible in calm weather below the waters, which you have preserved of Lough Neagh, 'When the clear, cold eve's declining.'[2] I do not know that it is authorised by records; but they tell you such a story, and say that the city was swallowed up by an earthquake. We moved to-day over the frontier to Verona, by a road suspected of thieves, — 'the wise *convey* it call,' — but without molestation. I shall remain here a day or two to gape at the usual marvels, — amphitheatre, paintings, and all that time-tax of travel, — though Catullus, Claudian, and Shakspeare have done more for Verona than it ever did for itself. They still pretend to show, I believe, the 'tomb of all the Capulets' — we shall see.

"Among many things at Milan, one pleased me particularly, viz. the correspondence (in the prettiest love-letters in the world) of Lucretia Borgia with Cardinal Bembo, (who, *you say*, made a very good cardinal,) and a lock of her hair, and some Spanish verses of hers, — the lock very fair and beautiful. I took one single hair of it as a relic, and wished sorely to get a copy of one or two of the letters; but it is prohibited: *that* I don't mind; but it was impracticable; and so I only got some of them by heart. They are kept in the Ambrosian Library, which I often visited to look them over — to the scandal of the librarian, who wanted to enlighten me with sundry valuable MSS., classical, philosophical, and pious. But I stick to the Pope's daughter, and wish myself a cardinal.

"I have seen the finest parts of Switzerland, the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Swiss and Italian lakes; for the beauties of which, I refer you to the Guide-book. The north

[1] With Milan, however, or its society, the noble traveller was far from being pleased; and in his Memoranda, I recollect, he described his stay there to be "like a ship under quarantine." Among other persons whom he met in the society of that place was M. Beyle, the ingenious author of "L'Histoire de la Peinture en Italie," who thus describes the impression their first interview left upon him: —

"Ce fut pendant l'automne de 1816, que je le rencontrai au théâtre de la *Scala*, à Milan, dans la loge de M. Louis de Brême. Je fus frappé des yeux de Lord Byron au moment où il écoutait un sestetto d'un opéra de Mayer intitulé *Elena*. Je n'ai vu de ma vie, rien de plus beau ni de plus expressif. Encore aujourd'hui, si je viens à penser à l'expression qu'un grand peintre devrait donner au génie, cette tête sublime reparaît tout-à-coup devant moi. J'eus un instant d'enthousiasme, et oubliant la juste répugnance que tout homme un peu fier doit avoir à se faire présenter à un pair d'Angleterre, je priai M. de Brême de m'introduire à Lord Byron, je me trouvai le lendemain à dîner chez M. de Brême, avec lui, et le célèbre Monti, l'immortel auteur de la *Basvigliana*. On parla poésie, on en vint à demander quels étaient les douze plus beaux vers faits depuis un siècle, en Français, en Italien, en Anglais. Les Italiens présens s'accordèrent à désigner les douze premiers vers de la *Mascheroniana* de Monti, comme ce que l'on avait fait de plus beau dans leur langue, depuis cent ans. *Monti* voulut bien nous les réciter. Je regardai Lord Byron, il fut ravi. La nuance de hauteur, ou plutôt l'air d'un homme *qui se trouve avoir à repousser une importunité*, qui déparait un peu sa belle figure, disparut tout-à-coup pour faire à l'expression du bonheur. Le premier chant de la *Mascheroniana*, que Monti récita presque en entier, vaincu par les acclamations des auditeurs, causa la plus vive sensation à l'auteur de Childe Harold. Je n'oublierai jamais l'expression divine de ses traits; c'était l'air serein de la puissance et du génie, et suivant moi, Lord Byron n'avait, en ce moment, aucune affectation à se procher." [Besides the "History of Painting" under his own name, M. Beyle has published, under the pseudonyme of Count de Stendhal, "Rome, Naples, and Florence, in 1817," &c.]

[2] ["On Lough Neagh's bank as the fisherman strays,
When the clear cold eve's declining,
He sees the round towers of other days,
In the wave beneath him shining."
Irish Melodies.]

of Italy is tolerably free from the English; but the south swarms with them, I am told. Madame de Stael I saw frequently at Copet, which she renders remarkably pleasant. She has been particularly kind to me. I was for some months her neighbour, in a country-house called Diodati, which I had on the Lake of Geneva. My plans are very uncertain; but it is probable that you will see me in England in the spring. I have some business there. If you write to me, will you address to the care of Mons. Hentsch, Banquier, Geneva, who receives and forwards my letters. Remember me to Rogers, who wrote to me lately, with a short account of your poem, which, I trust, is near the light. He speaks of it most highly.

"My health is very endurable, except that I am subject to casual giddiness and faintness, which is so like a fine lady, that I am rather ashamed of the disorder. When I sailed, I had a physician with me, whom, after some months of patience, I found it expedient to part with, before I left Geneva some time. On arriving at Milan, I found this gentleman in very good society, where he prospered for some weeks: but, at length, at the theatre, he quarrelled with an Austrian officer, and was sent out by the government in twenty-four hours. I was not present at his squabble; but, on hearing that he was put under arrest, I went and got him out of his confinement, but could not prevent his being sent off, which, indeed, he partly deserved, being quite in the wrong, and having begun a row for row's sake. I had preceded the Austrian government some weeks myself, in giving him his congé from Geneva. He is not a bad fellow, but very young and hot-headed, and more likely to incur diseases than to cure them. Hobhouse and myself found it useless to intercede for him. This happened some time before we left Milan. He is gone to Florence.

At Milan I saw, and was visited by, Monti, the most celebrated of the living Italian poets. He seems near sixty; in face he is like the late Cooke the actor. His frequent changes in politics have made him very unpopular as a man. I saw many more of their literati; but none whose names are well known in England, except Acerbi.[1] I lived much with the Italians, particularly with the Marquis of Breme's family, who are very able and intelligent men, especially the Abbate. There was a famous improvvisatore who held forth while I was there. His fluency astonished me; but, although I understand Italian, and speak it (with more readiness than accuracy), I could only carry off a few very common-place mythological images, and one line about Artemisia, and another about Algiers, with sixty words of an entire tragedy about Etocles and Polynices. Some of the Italians liked him — others called his performance 'seccatura' (a devilish good word, by the way) and all Milan was in controversy about him.

The state of morals in these parts is in some sort lax. A mother and son were pointed out at the theatre, as being pronounced by the Milanese world to be of the Theban dynasty — but this was all. The narrator (one of the first men in Milan) seemed to be not sufficiently scandalised by the taste or the tie. All society in Milan is carried on at the opera: they have private boxes, where they play at cards, or talk, or any thing else; but (except at the Cassino) there are no open houses, or balls, &c. &c.

"The peasant girls have all very fine dark eyes, and many of them are beautiful. There are also two dead bodies in fine preservation — one Saint Carlo Boromeo, at Milan; the other not a saint, but a chief, named Visconti, at Monza — both of which appeared very agreeable. In one of the Boromean isles (the Isola bella), there is a large laurel — the largest known — on which Buonaparte, staying there just before the battle of Marengo, carved with his knife the word 'Battaglia.' I saw the letters, now half worn out and partly erased.

"Excuse this tedious letter. To be tiresome is the privilege of old age and absence; I avail myself of the latter, and the former I have anticipated. If I do not speak to you of my own affairs, it is not from want of confidence, but to spare you and myself. My day is over — what then? — I have had it. To be sure, I have shortened it; and if I had done as much by this letter, it would have been as well. But you will forgive that, if not the other faults of

"Yours ever and most affectionately,

"B.

"P.S. — November 7. 1816.

"I have been over Verona. The amphitheatre is wonderful — beats even Greece. Of the truth of Juliet's story they seem tenacious to a degree, insisting on the fact — giving a date (1303), and showing a tomb.[2] It is a plain, open, and partly de-

[1] [An eminent physician, author of several medical works, and one of the editors of the "Bibliotheca Italiana." He died at Milan in 1827.]

[2] ["Are those the distant turrets of Verona?
And shall I sup where Juliet at the masque
Saw her loved Montague, and now sleeps by him?"

cayed sarcophagus, with withered leaves in it, in a wild and desolate conventual garden, once a cemetery, now ruined to the very graves. The situation struck me as very appropriate to the legend, being blighted as their love. I have brought away a few pieces of the granite, to give to my daughter and my nieces. Of the other marvels of this city, paintings, antiquities, &c., excepting the tombs of the Scaliger princes, I have no pretensions to judge. The Gothic monuments of the Scaligers pleased me, but 'a poor virtuoso am I,' and ever yours."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1816.

VENICE. — THE FORNARINA. — ARMENIAN STUDIES. — LETTERS TO MOORE AND MURRAY. — PICTURES OF VENETIAN SOCIETY. —ANECDOTES. — THE ALBRIZZI. — CANOVA'S HELEN. — THEATRICALS. — CARNIVAL. — PREFACE TO ARMENIAN GRAMMAR.

It must have been observed, in my account of Lord Byron's life previous to his marriage, that, without leaving altogether unnoticed (what, indeed, was too notorious to be so evaded) certain affairs of gallantry in which he had the reputation of being engaged, I have thought it right, besides refraining from such details in my narrative, to suppress also whatever passages in his Journals and Letters might be supposed to bear too personally or particularly on the same delicate topics. Incomplete as the strange history of his mind and heart must, in one of its most interesting chapters, be left by these omissions, still a deference to that peculiar sense of decorum in this country, which marks the mention of such frailties as hardly a less crime than the commission of them, and, still more, the regard due to the feelings of the living, who ought not rashly to be made to suffer for the errors of the dead, have combined to render this sacrifice, however much it may be regretted, necessary.

We have now, however, shifted the scene to a region where less caution is requisite; — where, from the different standard applied to female morals in these respects, if the wrong itself be not lessened by this deminution of the consciousness of it, less scruple may be, at least, felt towards persons so circumstanced, and whatever delicacy we may think right to exercise in speaking of their frailties must be with reference rather to our views and usages than theirs.

Availing myself, with this latter qualification, of the greater latitude thus allowed me, I shall venture so far to depart from the plan hitherto pursued, as to give, with but little suppression, the noble poet's letters relative to his Italian adventures. To throw a veil altogether over these irregularities of his private life would be to afford — were it even practicable — but a partial portraiture of his character[1]; while, on the other hand, to rob him of the advantage of being himself the historian of his errors (where no injury to others can flow from the disclosure) would be to deprive him of whatever softening light can be thrown round such transgressions by the vivacity and fancy, the passionate love of beauty, and the strong yearning after affection which will be found to have, more or less, mingled with even the least refined of his attachments. Neither is any great danger to be apprehended from the sanction or seduction of such an example; as they who would dare to plead the authority of Lord Byron for their errors must first be able to trace them to the same palliating sources, — to that sensibility, whose very excesses showed its strength and depth, — that strength of imagination, to the very verge, perhaps, of what reason can bear without giving way, — that whole combination, in short, of grand but disturbing powers, which alone could be allowed to extenuate such moral derangement, but which, even in him thus dangerously gifted, were insufficient to excuse it.

" The old palace of the Cappelletti, with its uncouth balcony and irregular windows, is still standing in a lane near the market-place; and what Englishman can behold it with indifference? When we enter Verona, we forget ourselves, and are almost inclined to say with Dante,

Vieni à veder Montecchi, e Cappelletti."

ROGERS: *Italy*.]

[1] [" To this we answer, that Mr. Moore was not reduced to the necessity of either veiling them 'altogether,' or exhibiting Lord Byron's letters concerning them 'with but little suppression.' Would it not have answered every purpose which Mr. Moore avows, to confess, with the brevity of sorrow, that during several years of his prime in manhood and in intellect, this great poet, as he conceived, unjustifiably deserted by his wife, and dragooned out of his natural sphere of society by the persecutions of envious hypocrisy, rebelled against the world and the world's laws, and in the fierce glee of desperation flung himself into as heartless a career of sensuality as it ever entered into the head of a Crebillon or a Louvet to depict? Would not this have satisfied abundantly all whose only object it was to understand Lord Byron's history?"— *Quarterly Review*, 1831.]

Having premised these few observations, I shall now proceed, with less interruption, to lay his correspondence, during this and the two succeeding years, before the reader: —

LETTER 252. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, November 17. 1816.

"I wrote to you from Verona the other day in my progress hither, which letter I hope you will receive. Some three years ago, or it may be more, I recollect your telling me that you had received a letter from our friend Sam, dated 'On board his gondola.' *My* gondola is, at this present, waiting for me on the canal; but I prefer writing to you in the house, it being autumn —and rather an English autumn than otherwise. It is my intention to remain at Venice during the winter, probably, as it has always been (next to the East) the greenest island of my imagination. It has not disappointed me; though its evident decay would, perhaps, have that effect upon others. But I have been familiar with ruins too long to dislike desolation. Besides, I have fallen in love, which, next to falling into the canal, (which would be of no use, as I can swim,) is the best or the worst thing I could do. I have got some extremely good apartments in the house of a 'Merchant of Venice,' who is a good deal occupied with business, and has a wife in her twenty-second year. Marianna (that is her name) is in her appearance altogether like an antelope. She has the large, black, oriental eyes, with that peculiar expression in them which is seen rarely among *Europeans* — even the Italians — and which many of the Turkish women give themselves by tinging the eyelid [1], — an art not known out of that country, I believe. This expression she has *naturally*, — and something more than this. In short, I cannot describe the effect of this kind of eye, — at least upon me. Her features are regular, and rather aquiline — mouth small — skin clear and soft, with a kind of hectic colour — forehead remarkably good: her hair is of the dark gloss, curl, and colour of Lady J **'s: her figure is light and pretty, and she is a famous songstress — scientifically so; her natural voice (in conversation, I mean) is very sweet; and the naïveté of the Venetian dialect is always pleasing in the mouth of a woman.

"November 23.

"You will perceive that my description, which was proceeding with the minuteness of a passport, has been interrupted for several days.

"December 5.

"Since my former dates, I do not know that I have much to add on the subject, and, luckily, nothing to take away; for I am more pleased than ever with my Venetian, and begin to feel very serious on that point — so much so, that I shall be silent.

"By way of divertisement, I am studying daily, at an Armenian monastery, the Armenian language. I found that my mind wanted something craggy to break upon; and this — as the most difficult thing I could discover here for an amusement — I have chosen, to torture me into attention. It is a rich language, however, and would amply repay any one the trouble of learning it. I try, and shall go on; — but I answer for nothing, least of all for my intentions or my success. There are some very curious MSS. in the monastery, as well as books; translations also from Greek originals, now lost, and from Persian and Syriac, &c.; besides works of their own people. Four years ago the French instituted an Armenian professorship. Twenty pupils presented themselves on Monday morning, full of noble ardour, ingenuous youth, and impregnable industry. They persevered, with a courage worthy of the nation and of universal conquest, till Thursday; when *fifteen* of the *twenty* succumbed to the six-and-twentieth letter of the alphabet. It is, to be sure, a Waterloo of an Alphabet — that must be said for them. But it is so like these fellows, to do by it as they did by their sovereigns — abandon both; to parody the old rhymes, 'Take a thing and give a thing' — 'Take a king and give a king.' They are the worst of animals, except their conquerors.

"I hear that Hodgson is your neighbour, having a living in Derbyshire. You will find him an excellent-hearted fellow, as well as one of the cleverest; a little, perhaps, too much japanned by preferment in the church and the tuition of youth, as well as inoculated with the disease of domestic felicity, besides being over-run with fine feelings about woman and *constancy* (that small change of Love, which people exact so rigidly receive in such counterfeit coin, and repay in baser metal); but, otherwise, a very worthy man, who has lately got a pretty wife, and (I suppose) a child by this time. Pray remember me to him, and say that I know not which to envy most his neighbourhood — him, or you.

[1] ["Her eyelashes, though dark as night, were tinged
(It is the country's custom), but in vain;
For those large black eyes were so blackly fringed,
The glossy rebels mock'd the jetty stain."
Don Juan, c. iii. st. 75.]

"Of Venice I shall say little. You must have seen many descriptions; and they are most of them like. It is a poetical place; and classical, to us, from Shakspeare and Otway. I have not yet sinned against it in verse, nor do I know that I shall do so, having been tuneless since I crossed the Alps, and feeling, as yet, no renewal of the 'estro.' By the way, I suppose you have seen 'Glenarvon.' Madame de Stael lent it me to read from Copet last autumn. It seems to me, that if the authoress had written the *truth*, and nothing but the truth — the whole truth — the romance would not only have been more *romantic*, but more entertaining. As for the likeness, the picture can't be good — I did not sit long enough. When you have leisure, let me hear from and of you, believing me ever and truly yours most affectionately, "B.

"P. S. — Oh! *your poem* — is it out? I hope Longman has paid his thousands: but don't you do as H * * T * *'s father[1] did, who, having made money by a quarto tour, became a vinegar merchant; when, lo! his vinegar turned sweet (and be d—d to it) and ruined him. My last letter to you (from Verona) was enclosed to Murray — have you got it? Direct to me *here*, *poste restante*. There are no English here at present. There were several in Switzerland — some women; but, except Lady Dalrymple Hamilton[2], most of them as ugly as virtue — at least, those that I saw."

LETTER 253. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, December 24. 1816.

"I have taken a fit of writing to you, which portends postage — once from Verona — once from Venice, and again from Venice — *thrice* that is. For this you may thank yourself; for I heard that you complained of my silence — so, here goes for garrulity.

"I trust that you received my other twain of letters. My 'way of life' (or 'May of life,' which is it, according to the commentators?) — my 'way of life' is fallen into great regularity. In the mornings I go over in my gondola to babble Armenian with the friars of the convent of St. Lazarus, and to help one of them in correcting the English of an English and Armenian grammar which he is publishing. In the evenings I do one of many nothings — either at the theatres, or some of the conversaziones, which are like our routs, or rather worse, for the women sit in a semicircle by the lady of the mansion, and the men stand about the room. To be sure, there is one improvement upon ours — instead of lemonade with their ices, they hand about stiff *rum-punch* — *punch*, by my palate; and this they think *English*. I would not disabuse them of so agreeable an error, — 'no, not for Venice.'

"Last night I was at the Count Governor's, which, of course, comprises the best society, and is very much like other gregarious meetings in every country, — as in ours, — except that, instead of the Bishop of Winchester, you have the Patriarch of Venice, and a motley crew of Austrians, Germans, noble Venetians, foreigners, and, if you see a quiz, you may be sure he is a Consul. Oh, by the way, I forgot, when I wrote from Verona, to tell you that at Milan I met with a countryman of yours — a Colonel * * * *, a very excellent, good-natured fellow, who knows and shows all about Milan, and is, as it were, a native there. He is particularly civil to strangers, and this is his history, — at least, an episode of it.

"Six-and-twenty years ago, Col. * * * *, then an ensign, being in Italy, fell in love with the Marchesa * * * *, and she with him. The lady must be, at least, twenty years his senior. The war broke out; he returned to England, to serve — not his country, for that's Ireland — but England, which is a different thing; and *she* — heaven knows what she did. In the year 1814, the first annunciation of the Definitive Treaty of Peace (and tyranny) was developed to the astonished Milanese by the arrival of Col. * * * *, who, flinging himself full length at the feet of Mad. * * * *, murmured forth, in half-forgotten Irish Italian, eternal vows of indelible constancy. The lady screamed, and exclaimed, 'Who are you?' The Colonel cried, 'What! don't you know me? I am so and so,' &c. &c. &c.; till, at length, the Marchesa, mounting from reminiscence to reminiscence, through the lovers of the intermediate twenty-five years, arrived at last at the recollection of her *povero* sub-lieutenant. She then said, 'Was there ever

[1] [The gentleman here spoken of was, no doubt, Richard Twiss, Esq., the uncle, not the father, of Horace Twiss, Esq. At an early period of life, Mr. Twiss published "Travels through Spain and Portugal," which Dr. Johnson considered "as good as the first book of travels one can take up." His next work was a "Tour in Ireland," in which he commented so freely on the manners of the ladies of the sister kingdom, that he excited their resentment in a manner equally whimsical and original. He also published "Anecdotes of the Game of Chess." He injured a good fortune by speculating in a project of manufacturing paper from straw. He died in 1812.]

[2] [The Hon. Jane Duncan, eldest daughter of Adam, first Viscount Duncan. She was married to Sir Hew Dalrymple Hamilton in May, 1800.]

such virtue ' (that was her very word) and, being now a widow, gave him apartments in her palace, reinstated him in all the rights of wrong, and held him up to the admiring world as a miracle of incontinent fidelity, and the unshaken Abdiel of absence.

"Methinks this is as pretty a moral tale as any of Marmontel's. Here is another. The same lady, several years ago, made an escapade with a Swede, Count Fersen (the same whom the Stockholm mob quartered and lapidated not very long since), and they arrived at an Osteria on the road to Rome or thereabouts. It was a summer evening, and, while they were at supper, they were suddenly regaled by a symphony of fiddles in an adjacent apartment, so prettily played, that, wishing to hear them more distinctly, the Count rose, and going into the musical society, said, 'Gentlemen, I am sure that, as a company of gallant cavaliers, you will be delighted to show your skill to a lady, who feels anxious,' &c. &c. The men of harmony were all acquiescence — every instrument was tuned and toned, and, striking up one of their most ambrosial airs, the whole band followed the Count to the lady's apartment. At their head was the first fiddler, who, bowing and fiddling at the same moment, headed his troop and advanced up the room. Death and discord! — it was the Marquis himself, who was on a serenading party in the country, while his spouse had run away from town. The rest may be imagined — but, first of all, the lady tried to persuade him that she was there on purpose to meet him, and had chosen this method for an harmonic surprise. So much for this gossip, which amused me when I heard it, and I send it to you in the hope it may have the like effect. Now we'll return to Venice.

"The day after to-morrow (to-morrow being Christmas-day) the Carnival begins. I dine with the Countess Albrizzi and a party, and go to the opera. On that day the Phenix, (not the Insurance Office, but) the theatre of that name, opens: I have got me a box there for the season, for two reasons, one of which is, that the music is remarkably good. The Contessa Albrizzi, of whom I have made mention, is the De Stael of Venice; not young but a very learned, unaffected, good-natured woman; very polite to strangers, and, I believe, not at all dissolute, as most of the women are. She has written very well on the works of Canova, and also a volume of Characters, besides other printed matter. She is of Corfu, but married a dead Venetian — that is, dead since he married.

"My flame (my 'Donna,' whom I spoke of in my former epistle, my Marianna) is still my Marianna, and I her — what she pleases. She is by far the prettiest woman I have seen here, and the most loveable I have met with any where — as well as one of the most singular. I believe I told you the rise and progress of our *liaison* in my former letter. Lest that should not have reached you, I will merely repeat, that she is a Venetian, two-and-twenty years old, married to a merchant well to do in the world, and that she has great black oriental eyes, and all the qualities which her eyes promise. Whether being in love with her has steeled me or not, I do not know; but I have not seen many other women who seem pretty. The nobility, in particular, are a sad-looking race — the gentry rather better. And now, what art *thou* doing?

"What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
What are you doing now,
Oh Thomas Moore?
Sighing or suing now,
Rhyming or wooing now,
Billing or cooing now,
Which, Thomas Moore?

Are you not near the Luddites? By the Lord! if there's a row, but I'll be among ye! How go on the weavers — the breakers of frames — the Lutherans of politics — the reformers?

"As the Liberty lads o'er the sea
Bought their freedom, and cheaply, with blood,
So we, boys, we
Will *die* fighting, or *live* free,
And down with all kings but King Ludd!

"When the web that we weave is complete,
And the shuttle exchanged for the sword,
We will fling the winding-sheet
O'er the despot at our feet,
And dye it deep in the gore he has pour'd.

"Though black as his heart its hue,
Since his veins are corrupted to mud,
Yet this is the dew
Which the tree shall renew
Of Liberty, planted by Ludd!

"There's an amiable *chanson* for you — all impromptu. I have written it principally to shock your neighbour * * * *[1], who is all clergy and loyalty — mirth and innocence — milk and water.

"But the Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore,
The Carnival's coming,
Oh Thomas Moore;
Masking and humming,
Fifing and drumming,
Guitarring and strumming,
Oh Thomas Moore.

[1] [Probably Mr. Bowles.]

The other night I saw a new play, — and the author. The subject was the sacrifice of Isaac. The play succeeded, and they called for the author — according to continental custom — and he presented himself, a noble Venetian, Mali, or Malapiero, by name. Mala was his name, and *pessima* his production, — at least, I thought so ; and I ought to know, having read more or less of five hundred Drury Lane offerings, during my coadjutorship with the sub-and-super Committee.

"When does your poem of poems come out? I hear that the Edinburgh Review has cut up Coleridge's Christabel, and declared against me for praising it.[1] I praised it, firstly, because I thought well of it ; secondly, because Coleridge was in great distress, and after doing what little I could for him in essentials, I thought that the public avowal of my good opinion might help him further, at least with the booksellers. I am very sorry that Jeffrey has attacked him, because, poor fellow, it will hurt him in mind and pocket. As for me, he's welcome — I shall never think less of Jeffrey for any thing he may say against me or mine in future.

"I suppose Murray has sent you, or will send (for I do not know whether they are out or no) the poem, or poesies, of mine, of last summer. By the mass! they are sublime — 'Ganion Coheriza' — gainsay who dares! Pray, let me hear from you, and of you, and, at least, let me know that you have received these three letters. Direct, right *here*, *poste restante*.

"Ever and ever, &c.

"P. S. — I heard the other day of a pretty trick of a bookseller, who has published some d—d nonsense, swearing the bastards to me, and saying he gave me five hundred guineas for them. He lies — I never wrote such stuff, never saw the poems, nor the publisher of them, in my life, nor had any communication, directly or indirectly, with the fellow. Pray say as much for me, if need be. I have written to Murray, to make him contradict the impostor."

LETTER 254. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, November 25. 1816.

"It is some months since I have heard from or of you — I think, not since I left Diodati. From Milan I wrote once or twice ; but have been here some little time, and intend to pass the winter without removing. I was much pleased with the Lago di Garda, and with Verona, particularly the amphitheatre, and a sarcophagus in a convent garden, which they show as Juliet's : they insist on the *truth* of her history. Since my arrival at Venice, the lady of the Austrian governor told me that between Verona and Vicenza there are still ruins of the castle of the *Montecchi*, and a chapel once appertaining to the Capulets. Romeo seems to have been of *Vicenza* by the tradition ; but I was a good deal surprised to find so firm a faith in Bandello's novel, which seems really to have been founded on a fact.

"Venice pleases me as much as I expected, and I expected much. It is one of those places which I know before I see them, and has always haunted me the most after the East. I like the gloomy gaiety of their gondolas, and the silence of their canals. I do not even dislike the evident decay of the city, though I regret the singularity of its vanished costume ; however, there is much left still ; the Carnival, too, is coming.

"St. Mark's, and indeed Venice, is most alive at night. The theatres are not open till *nine*, and the society is proportionably late. All this is to my taste ; but most of your countrymen miss and regret the rattle of hackney coaches, without which they can't sleep.

"I have got remarkably good apartments in a private house : I see something of the inhabitants (having had a good many letters to some of them) ; I have got my gondola ; I read a little, and luckily could speak Italian (more fluently though than correctly) long ago. I am studying, out of curiosity, the *Venetian* dialect, which is very naïve, and soft, and peculiar, though not at all classical ; I go out frequently, and am in very good contentment.

"The Helen of Canova (a bust which is in the house of Madame the Countess d'Albrizzi, whom I know) is, without exception, to my mind, the most perfectly beautiful of human conceptions, and far beyond my ideas of human execution.

"In this beloved marble view,
Above the works and thoughts of man,
What Nature *could*, but *would not*, do,
And Beauty and Canova *can* ;
Beyond Imagination's power,
Beyond the bard's defeated art,
With Immortality her dower,
Behold the *Helen* of the *heart!*

[1] ["Lord Byron, it seems, has somewhere praised Christabel, as 'a wild and singularly original and beautiful poem.' Great as the noble bard's merits undoubtedly are in poetry, some of his latest publications dispose us to distrust his authority, where the question is what ought to meet the public eye ; and the work before us affords an additional proof, that his judgment on such matters is not absolutely to be relied on."— *Edin. Rev.* vol. xxvii. p. 58.]

Talking of the 'heart' reminds me that I have fallen in love — fathomless love [1]; but lest you should make some splendid mistake, and envy me the possession of some of those princesses or countesses with whose affections your English voyagers are apt to invest themselves, I beg leave to tell you, that my goddess is only the wife of a 'Merchant of Venice;' but then she is pretty as an antelope, is but two-and-twenty years old, has the large, black, oriental eyes, with the Italian countenance, and dark glossy hair, of the curl and colour of Lady Jersey's. Then she has the voice of a lute, and the song of a seraph (though not quite so sacred), besides a long postscript of graces, virtues, and accomplishments, enough to furnish out a new chapter for Solomon's Song. But her great merit is finding out mine — there is nothing so amiable as discernment.[2]

"The general race of women appear to be handsome; but in Italy, as on almost all the Continent, the highest orders are by no means a well-looking generation, and indeed reckoned by their countrymen very much otherwise. Some are exceptions, but most of them as ugly as Virtue herself.

"If you write, address to me here, *poste restante*, as I shall probably stay the winter over. I never see a newspaper, and know nothing of England, except in a letter now and then from my sister. Of the MS. sent you I know nothing, except that you have received it, and are to publish it, &c. &c.: but when, where, and how, you leave me to guess; but it don't much matter.

"I suppose you have a world of works passing through your process for next year? When does Moore's poem appear? I sent a letter for him, addressed to your care, the other day."

LETTER 255. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, December 4. 1816.

"I have written to you so frequently of late, that you will think me a bore; as I think you a very impolite person, for not answering my letters from Switzerland, Milan, Verona, and Venice. There are some things I wanted, and want, to know; viz. whether Mr. Davies, of inaccurate memory, had or had not delivered the MS. as delivered to him; because, if he has not, you will find that he will bountifully bestow transcriptions on all the curious of his acquaintance, in which case you may probably find your publication anticipated by the 'Cambridge' or other Chronicles. In the next place, — I forget what was next; but in the third place, I want to hear whether you have yet published, or when you mean to do so, or why you have not done so, because in your last (Sept. 20th, — you may be ashamed of the date) you talked of this being done immediately.

"From England I hear nothing, and know nothing of any thing or any body. I have but one correspondent (except Mr. Kinnaird on business now and then), and her a female; so that I know no more of your island, or city, than the Italian version of the French papers chooses to tell me, or the advertisements of Mr. Colburn tagged to the end of your Quarterly Review for the year *ago*. I wrote to you at some length last week; so that I have little to add, except that I have begun, and am proceeding in, a study of the Armenian language, which I acquire, as well as I can, at the Armenian convent, where I go every day to take lessons of a learned friar, and have gained some singular and not useless information with regard to the literature and customs of that oriental people. They have an establishment here — a church and convent of ninety monks, very learned and accomplished men, some of them. They have also a press, and make great efforts for the enlightening of their nation. I find the language (which is *twin*, the *literal* and the *vulgar*) difficult, but not invincible (at least I hope not). I shall go on. I found it necessary to twist my mind round some severer study; and this, as being the hardest I could devise here, will be a file for the serpent.

"I mean to remain here till the spring, so address to me *directly* to *Venice*, *poste restante*. — Mr. Hobhouse, for the present, is gone to Rome, with his brother, brother's wife, and sister, who overtook him here: he returns in two months. I should have gone too, but I fell in love, and must stay that over. I should think *that* and the Armenian alphabet will last the winter. The lady has, luckily for me, been less obdurate than the language, or, between the two, I should have lost my remains of sanity. By the way, she is not Armenian, but a Venetian, as I believe I told you in my last. As for Italian, I am fluent enough, even in its Venetian modification, which is something like the Somer-

[1] ["Which, except falling into the canal (and that would be useless, as I swim), is the best, or worst, thing I could do. I am therefore in love — fathomless," &c. *MS.*]

[2] ["Our little arrangement is completed; the usual oaths having been taken, and every thing fulfilled according to the 'understood relations' of such liaisons."— *MS.*]

setshire version of English ; and as for the more classical dialects, I had not forgot my former practice much during my voyaging.

"Yours, ever and truly, B.

"P. S. — Remember me to Mr. Gifford." And do not forget me to ———; but I don't think I have any other friends of your acquaintance."

LETTER 256. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, Dec. 9. 1816.

"In a letter from England, I am informed that a man named Johnson has taken upon himself to publish some poems called a 'Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, a Tempest, and an Address to my Daughter,' &c., and to attribute them to me, adding that he had paid five hundred guineas for them. The answer to this is short: *I never wrote such poems, never received the sum he mentions, nor any other in the same quarter, nor* (as far as moral or mortal certainty can be sure) *ever had, directly or indirectly, the slightest communication with Johnson in my life;* not being aware that the person existed till this intelligence gave me to understand that there were such people. Nothing surprises me, or this perhaps *would*, and most things amuse me, or this probably would *not*. With regard to myself, the man has merely *lyed;* that's natural ; his betters have set him the example. But with regard to you, his assertion may perhaps injure you in your publications ; and I desire that it may receive the most public and unqualified contradiction. I do not know that there is any punishment for a thing of this kind; and if there were, I should not feel disposed to pursue this ingenious mountebank farther than was necessary for his confutation ; but thus far it may be necessary to proceed.

"You will make what use you please of this letter ; and Mr. Kinnaird, who has power to act for me during my absence, will, I am sure, readily join you in any steps which it may be proper to take, with regard to the absurd falsehood of this poor creature. As you will have recently received several letters from me on my way to Venice, as well as two written since my arrival, I will not at present trouble you further.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. — Pray let me hear that you have received this letter. Address to Venice, *poste restante*.

"To prevent the recurrence of similar fabrications, you may state, that I consider myself responsible for no publication from the year 1812 up to the present date, which is not from your press. I speak of course from that period, because, previously, Cawthorn and Ridge had both printed compositions of mine. 'A Pilgrimage to Jerusalem!' How the devil should I write about *Jerusalem*, never having yet been there? As for 'A Tempest,' it was *not* a *tempest* when I left England, but a very fresh breeze : and as to an 'Address to little Ada,' (who, by the way, is a year old to-morrow,) I never wrote a line about her, except in 'Farewell' and the third canto of Childe Harold."

LETTER 257. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, Dec. 27. 1816.

"As the demon of silence seems to have possessed you, I am determined to have my revenge in postage ; this is my sixth or seventh letter since summer and Switzerland. My last was an injunction to contradict and consign to confusion that Cheapside impostor, who (I heard by a letter from your Island) had thought proper to append my name to his spurious poesy, of which I know nothing, nor of his pretended purchase or copyright. I hope you have, at least, received *that* letter.

"As the news of Venice must be very interesting to you, I will regale you with it.

"Yesterday being the feast of St. Stephen, every mouth was put in motion. There was nothing but fiddling and playing on the virginals, and all kinds of conceits and divertisements, on every canal of this aquatic city. I dined with the Countess Albrizzi and a Paduan and Venetian party, and afterwards went to the opera, at the Fenice theatre (which opens for the Carnival on that day), — the finest, by the way, I have ever seen ; it beats our theatres hollow in beauty and scenery, and those of Milan and Brescia bow before it. The opera and its sirens were much like other operas and women, but the subject of the said opera was something edifying ; it turned — the plot and conduct thereof — upon a fact narrated by Livy of a hundred and fifty married ladies having poisoned a hundred and fifty husbands in good old times. The bachelors of Rome believed this extraordinary mortality to be merely the common effect of matrimony or a pestilence ; but the surviving Benedicts, being all seized with the cholic, examined into the matter, and found that 'their possets had been drugged ;' the consequence of which was much scandal and several suits at law. This is really and truly the subject of the musical piece at the Fenice ; and you can't conceive what pretty things are sung and recitativoed about the *horrenda strage*. The conclusion was a lady's head about to be chopped off by a lictor, but (I

am sorry to say) he left it on, and she got up and sung a trio with the two Consuls, the Senate in the back-ground being chorus. The ballet was distinguished by nothing remarkable, except that the principal she-dancer went into convulsions because she was not applauded on her first appearance; and the manager came forward to ask if there was 'ever a physician in the theatre.' There was a Greek one in my box, whom I wished very much to volunteer his services, being sure that in this case these would have been the last convulsions which would have troubled the ballarina; but he would not. The crowd was enormous; and in coming out, having a lady under my arm, I was obliged, in making way, almost to 'beat a Venetian and traduce the state,' being compelled to regale a person with an English punch in the guts, which sent him as far back as the squeeze and the passage would admit. He did not ask for another; but, with great signs of disapprobation and dismay, appealed to his compatriots, who laughed at him.

"I am going on with my Armenian studies in a morning, and assisting and stimulating in the English portion of an English and Armenian grammar, now publishing at the convent of St. Lazarus.

"The superior of the friars is a bishop, and a fine old fellow, with the beard of a meteor. Father Paschal is also a learned and pious soul. He was two years in England.

"I am still dreadfully in love with the Adriatic lady whom I spake of in a former letter (and *not* in *this* — I add, for fear of mistakes, for the only one mentioned in the first part of this epistle is elderly and bookish, two things which I have ceased to admire), and love in this part of the world is no sinecure. This is also the season when every body make up their intrigues for the ensuing year, and cut for partners for the next deal.

"And now, if you don't write, I don't know what I won't say or do, nor what I will. Send me some news — good news. Yours very truly, &c. &c. &c.

"B.

"P.S.—Remember me to Mr. Gifford, with all duty.

"I hear that the Edinburgh Review has cut up Coleridge's Christabel, and me for praising it, which omen, I think, bodes no great good to your forthcome or coming Canto and Castle (of Chillon). My run of luck within the last year seems to have taken a turn every way; but never mind, I will bring myself through in the end — if not, I can be but where I began. In the mean time, I am not displeased to be where I am — I mean, at Venice. My Adriatic nymph is this moment here, and I must therefore repose from this letter."

LETTER 258. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, Jan. 2. 1817.

"Your letter has arrived. Pray, in publishing the third canto, have you *omitted* any passages? I hope *not;* and indeed wrote to you on my way over the Alps to prevent such an incident. Say in your next whether or not the *whole* of the canto (as sent to you) has been published. I wrote to you again the other day, (*twice*, I think,) and shall be glad to hear of the reception of those letters.

"To-day is the 2d of January. On this day *three* years ago The Corsair's publication is dated, I think, in my letter to Moore. On this day *two* years I married ('Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,' — I sha'n't forget the day in a hurry), and it is odd enough that I this day received a letter from you announcing the publication of Childe Harold, &c. &c. on the day of the date of 'The Corsair;' and I also received one from my sister, written on the 10th of December, my daughter's birth-day (and relative chiefly to my daughter), and arriving on the day of the date of my marriage, this present 2d of January, the month of my birth, — and various other astrologous matters, which I have no time to enumerate.

"By the way, you might as well write to Hentsch, my Geneva banker, and enquire whether the *two packets* consigned to his care were or were not delivered to Mr. St. Aubyn, or if they are still in his keeping. One contains papers, letters, and all the original MS. of your third canto, as first conceived; and the other, some bones from the field of Morat. Many thanks for your news, and the good spirits in which your letter is written.

"Venice and I agree very well; but I do not know that I have any thing new to say, except of the last new opera, which I sent in my late letter. The Carnival is commencing, and there is a good deal of fun here and there — besides business; for all the world are making up their intrigues for the season, changing, or going on upon a renewed lease. I am very well off with Marianna, who is not at all a person to tire me; firstly, because I do not tire of a woman *personally*, but because they are generally bores in their disposition; and, secondly, because she is amiable, and has a tact which is not always the portion of the fair creation; and, thirdly, she is very pretty; and, fourthly — but there is no occasion for further specification. So far we

have gone on very well; as to the future, I never anticipate — *carpe diem* — the past at least is one's own, which is one reason for making sure of the present. So much for my proper *liaison*.

"The general state of morals here is much the same as in the Doges' time; a woman is virtuous (according to the code) who limits herself to her husband and one lover; those who have two, three, or more, are a little *wild*; but it is only those who are indiscriminately diffuse, and form a low connection, such as the Princess of Wales with her courier, (who, by the way, is made a knight of Malta,) who are considered as overstepping the modesty of marriage. In Venice, the nobility have a trick of marrying with dancers and singers; and, truth to say, the women of their own order are by no means handsome; but the general race, the women of the second and other orders, the wives of the advocates, merchants, and proprietors, and untitled gentry, are mostly *bel sangue*, and it is with these that the more amatory connections are usually formed. There are also instances of stupendous constancy. I know a woman of fifty who never had but one lover, who dying early, she became devout, renouncing all but her husband. She piques herself, as may be presumed, upon this miraculous fidelity, talking of it occasionally with a species of misplaced morality, which is rather amusing. There is no convincing a woman here that she is in the smallest degree deviating from the rule of right or the fitness of things in having an *amoroso*. The great sin seems to lie in concealing it, or having more than one; that is, unless such an extension of the prerogative is understood and approved of by the prior claimant.

"In another sheet, I send you some sheets of a grammar, English and Armenian, for the use of the Armenians[1], of which I promoted, and indeed induced, the publication. (It cost me but a thousand francs — French livres.) I still pursue my lessons in the language without any rapid progress, but advancing a little daily. Padre Paschal, with some little help from me, as translator of his Italian into English, is also proceeding in a MS. Grammar for the *English* acquisition of Armenian, which will be printed also, when finished.

"We want to know if there are any Armenian types and letter-press in England, at Oxford, Cambridge, or elsewhere? You know, I suppose, that, many years ago, the two Whistons published in England an original text of a history of Armenia, with their own Latin translation? Do those types still exist? and where? Pray enquire among your learned acquaintance.

"When this Grammar (I mean the one now printing) is done, will you have any objection to take forty or fifty copies, which will not cost in all above five or ten guineas, and try the curiosity of the learned with a sale of them? Say yes or no, as you like. I can assure you that they have some very curious books and MSS., chiefly translations from Greek originals now lost. They are, besides, a much respected and learned community, and the study of their language was taken up with great ardour by some literary Frenchmen in Buonaparte's time.

"I have not done a stitch of poetry since I left Switzerland, and have not, at present, the *estro* upon me. The truth is, that you are *afraid* of having a *fourth* canto *before* September, and of another copyright, but I have at present no thoughts of resuming that poem, nor of beginning any other. If I write, I think of trying prose; but I dread introducing living people, or applications which might be made to living people. Perhaps one day or other I may attempt some work of fancy in prose, descriptive of Italian manners and of human passions; but at present I am pre-occupied. As for poesy, mine is the *dream* of the sleeping passions; when they are awake, I cannot speak their language, only in their somnambulism, and just now they are not dormant.

"If Mr Gifford wants *carte blanche* as to The Siege of Corinth, he has it, and may do as he likes with it.

"I sent you a letter contradictory of the Cheapside man (who invented the story you speak of) the other day. My best respects to Mr. Gifford, and such of my friends as you may see at your house. I wish you all prosperity and new year's gratulation, and am

"Yours, &c."

To the Armenian Grammar mentioned in the foregoing letter, the following interesting fragment, found among his papers, seems to have been intended as a Preface:—

"The English reader will probably be surprised to find my name associated with a

[1] [This volume, which is very creditably printed, is entitled "Grammar, English and Armenian, by Father Paschal Aucher, D.D., Member of the Armenian Academy of St. Lazarus," and bears for epigraph the saying of Charles the Fifth—"By as many languages as a man can speak, so many times more is he a man." "Father Paschal Aucher," says Mr. Matthews, "is a man of great learning, very extensive knowledge of the world, and most amiable manners." — *Diary of an Invalid*, p. 265.]

work of the present description, and inclined to give me more credit for my attainments as a linguist than they deserve.

"As I would not willingly be guilty of a deception, I will state, as shortly as I can, my own share in the compilation, with the motives which led to it. On my arrival at Venice, in the year 1816, I found my mind in a state which required study, and study of a nature which should leave little scope for the imagination, and furnish some difficulty in the pursuit.

"At this period I was much struck — in common, I believe, with every other traveller — with the society of the Convent of St. Lazarus, which appears to unite all the advantages of the monastic institution, without any of its vices.

"The neatness, the comfort, the gentleness, the unaffected devotion, the accomplishments, and the virtues of the brethren of the order, are well fitted to strike the man of the world with the conviction that 'there is another and a better' even in this life.

"These men are the priesthood of an oppressed and a noble nation, which has partaken of the proscription and bondage of the Jews and of the Greeks, without the sullenness of the former or the servility of the latter. This people has attained riches without usury, and all the honours that can be awarded to slavery without intrigue. But they have long occupied, nevertheless, a part of 'the House of Bondage,' who has lately multiplied her many mansions. It would be difficult, perhaps, to find the annals of a nation less stained with crimes than those of the Armenians, whose virtues have been those of peace, and their vices those of compulsion. But whatever may have been their destiny — and it has been bitter — whatever it may be in future, their country must ever be one of the most interesting on the globe; and perhaps their language only requires to be more studied to become more attractive. If the Scriptures are rightly understood, it was in Armenia that Paradise was placed — Armenia, which has paid as dearly as the descendants of Adam for that fleeting participation of its soil in the happiness of him who was created from its dust. It was in Armenia that the flood first abated, and the dove alighted. But with the disappearance of Paradise itself may be dated almost the unhappiness of the country; for though long a powerful kingdom, it was scarcely ever an independent one, and the satraps of Persia and the pachas of Turkey have alike desolated the region where God created man in his own image."

CHAPTER XXIX.

1817.

VENICE. — LETTERS TO MOORE, MURRAY, AND ROGERS. — PICTURES OF VENETIAN LIFE. — MR. HOBHOUSE AND THE QUARTERLY REVIEW. — PROGRESS OF MANFRED. — SIR WALTER SCOTT'S REVIEW OF CHILDE HAROLD, CANTO III. — ANECDOTES. — LALLA ROOKH. — ITALIAN ETHICS. — MATURIN'S BERTRAM. — ARMENIAN TRANSLATIONS. — COMPLETION OF MANFRED. — DOGE FALIERO.

LETTER 259. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, January 28. 1817.

"YOUR letter of the 8th is before me. The remedy for your plethora is simple — abstinence. I was obliged to have recourse to the like some years ago, I mean in point of *diet*, and, with the exception of some convivial weeks and days, (it might be months, now and then,) have kept to Pythagoras ever since. For all this, let me hear that you are better. You must not *indulge* in 'filthy beer,' nor in porter, nor eat *suppers* — the last are the devil to those who swallow dinner.

"I am truly sorry to hear of your father's misfortune — cruel at any time, but doubly cruel in advanced life. However, you will, at least, have the satisfaction of doing your part by him, and, depend upon it, it will not be in vain. Fortune, to be sure, is a female, but not such a b** as the rest (always excepting your wife and my sister from such sweeping terms); for she generally has some justice in the long run. I have no spite against her, though between her and Nemesis I have had some sore gauntlets to run — but then I have done my best to deserve no better. But to *you*, she is a good deal in arrear, and she will come round — mind if she don't: you have the vigour of life, of independence, of talent, spirit, and character all with you. What you can do for yourself, you have done and will do; and surely there are some others in the world who would not be sorry to be of use, if you would allow them to be useful, or at least attempt it.

"I think of being in England in the spring. If there is a row, by the sceptre of King Ludd, but I'll be one; and if there is none, and only a continuance of 'this meek, piping time of peace,' I will take a cottage a hundred yards to the south of your abode, and

become your neighbour; and we will compose such canticles, and hold such dialogues, as shall be the terror of the *Times* (including the newspaper of that name), and the wonder, and honour, and praise, of the Morning Chronicle and posterity.

"I rejoice to hear of your forthcoming in February—though I tremble for the 'magnificence,' which you attribute to the new Childe Harold. I am glad you like it; it is a fine indistinct piece of poetical desolation, and my favourite. I was half mad during the time of its composition, between metaphysics, mountains, lakes, love unextinguishable, thoughts unutterable, and the nightmare of my own delinquencies. I should, many a good day, have blown my brains out, but for the recollection that it would have given pleasure to my mother-in-law; and, even *then*, if I could have been certain to haunt her——but I won't dwell upon these trifling family matters.

"Venice is in the *estro* of her carnival, and I have been up these last two nights at the ridotto and the opera, and all that kind of thing. Now for an adventure. A few days ago a gondolier brought me a billet without a subscription, intimating a wish on the part of the writer to meet me either in gondola or at the island of San Lazaro, or at a third rendezvous, indicated in the note. 'I know the country's disposition well'—in Venice 'they do let Heaven see those tricks they dare not show,' &c. &c; so, for all response, I said that neither of the three places suited me; but that I would either be at home at ten at night *alone*, or be at the ridotto at midnight, where the writer might meet me masked. At ten o'clock I was at home and alone (Marianna was gone with her husband to a conversazione), when the door of my apartment opened, and in walked a well-looking and (for an Italian) *bionda* girl of about nineteen, who informed me that she was married to the brother of my *amorosa*, and wished to have some conversation with me. I made a decent reply, and we had some talk in Italian and Romaic (her mother being a Greek of Corfu), when lo! in a very few minutes in marches, to my very great astonishment, Marianna Segati, *in propriâ personâ*, and after making a most polite courtesy to her sister-in-law and to me, without a single word seizes her said sister-in-law by the hair, and bestows upon her some sixteen slaps, which would have made your ear ache only to hear their echo. I need not describe the screaming which ensued. The luckless visitor took flight. I seized Marianna, who, after several vain efforts to get away in pursuit of the enemy, fairly went into fits in my arms; and, in spite of reasoning, eau de Cologne, vinegar, half a pint of water, and God knows what other waters beside, continued so till past midnight.

"After damning my servants for letting people in without apprizing me, I found that Marianna in the morning had seen her sister-in-law's gondolier on the stairs, and, suspecting that his apparition boded her no good, had either returned of her own accord, or been followed by her maids or some other spy of her people to the conversazione, from whence she returned to perpetrate this piece of pugilism. I had seen fits before, and also some small scenery of the same genus in and out of our island: but this was not all. After about an hour, in comes—who? why, Signor Segati, her lord and husband, and finds me with his wife fainting upon a sofa, and all the apparatus of confusion, dishevelled hair, hats, handkerchiefs, salts, smelling bottles—and the lady as pale as ashes, without sense or motion. His first question was, 'What is all this?' The lady could not reply—so I did. I told him the explanation was the easiest thing in the world; but in the mean time it would be as well to recover his wife—at least, her senses. This came about in due time of suspiration and respiration.

"You need not be alarmed—jealousy is not the order of the day in Venice, and daggers are out of fashion; while duels, on love matters, are unknown—at least, with the husbands. But, for all this, it was an awkward affair; and though he must have known that I made love to Marianna, yet I believe he was not, till that evening, aware of the extent to which it had gone. It is very well known that almost all the married women have a lover; but it is usual to keep up the forms, as in other nations. I did not, therefore, know what the devil to say. I could not out with the truth, out of regard to her, and I did not choose to lie for my sake;—besides, the thing told itself. I thought the best way would be to let her explain it as she chose (a woman being never at a loss—the devil always sticks by them)—only determining to protect and carry her off, in case of any ferocity on the part of the Signor. I saw that he was quite calm. She went to bed, and next day—how they settled it, I know not, but settle it they did. Well—then I had to explain to Marianna about this never-to-be-sufficiently-confounded sister-in-law; which I did by swearing innocence, eternal constancy, &c. &c. But the sister-in-law, very much discomposed with being treated in such wise, has (not having her own shame

before her eyes, told the affair to half Venice, and the servants (who were summoned by the fight and the fainting) to the other half. But, here, nobody minds such trifles, except to be amused by them. I don't know whether you will be so, but I have scrawled a long letter out of these follies.

"Believe me ever, &c."

LETTER 260. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, January 24. 1817.

"I have been requested by the Countess Albrizzi here to present her with 'the Works;' I wish you therefore to send me a copy, that I may comply with her requisition. You may include the last published, of which I have seen and know nothing, but from your letter of the 13th of December.

"Mrs. Leigh tells me that most of her friends prefer the two first cantos. I do not know whether this be the general opinion or not (it is *not hers*); but it is natural it should be so. I, however, think differently, which is natural also; but who is right, or who is wrong, is of very little consequence.

"Dr. Polidori, as I hear from him by letter from Pisa, is about to return to England, to go to the Brazils on a medical speculation with the Danish consul. As you are in the favour of the powers that be, could you not get him some letters of recommendation from some of your government friends to some of the Portuguese settlers? He understands his profession well, and has no want of general talents; his faults are the faults of a pardonable vanity and youth. His remaining with me was out of the question; I have enough to do to manage my own scrapes; and as precepts without example are not the most gracious homilies, I thought it better to give him his congé: but I know no great harm of him, and some good. He is clever and accomplished; knows his profession, by all accounts, well; and is honourable in his dealings, and not at all malevolent. I think, with luck, he will turn out a useful member of society (from which he will lop the diseased members) and the College of Physicians. If you can be of any use to him, or know any one who can, pray be so, as he has his fortune to make. He has kept a *medical journal* under the eye of *Vacca*[1] (the first surgeon on the Continent) at Pisa: Vacca has corrected it, and it must contain some valuable hints or information on the practice of this country. If you can aid him in publishing this also, by your influence with your brethren, do; I do not ask you to publish it yourself, because that sort of request is too personal and embarrassing. He has also a tragedy, of which, having seen nothing, I say nothing: but the very circumstance of his having made these efforts (if they are only efforts), at one-and-twenty, is in his favour, and proves him to have good dispositions for his own improvement. So if, in the way of commendation or recommendation, you can aid his objects with your government friends, I wish you would. I should think some of your Admiralty Board might be likely to have it in their power."

LETTER 261. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, February 15. 1817.

"I have received your two letters, but not the parcel you mention. As the Waterloo spoils are arrived, I will make you a present of them, if you choose to accept of them; pray do.

"I do not exactly understand from your letter what has been omitted, or what not, in the publication; but I shall see probably some day or other. I could not attribute any but a *good* motive to Mr. Gifford or yourself in such omission; but as our politics are so very opposite, we should probably differ as to the passages. However, if it is only a *note* or notes or a line or so, it cannot signify. You say 'a *poem*;' *what* poem? You can tell me in your next.

"Of Mr. Hobhouse's quarrel with the Quarterly Review, I know very little except * * 's article itself[2], which was certainly harsh enough; but I quite agree that it would have been better not to answer—particularly after Mr. *W. W.*[3], who never more will trouble you, trouble you. I have been uneasy, because Mr. H. told me that his letter or preface was to be addressed to *me*. Now, he and I are friends of many years; I have many obligations to him, and he none to me which have not been cancelled and more than repaid; but Mr. Gifford and I are friends also, and he has moreover been literally so, through thick and thin, in despite of difference of years, morals, habits, and even *politics;* and therefore I feel in a very awkward situation between the two, Mr. Gifford and my friend Hobhouse, and can only wish that they had no differences, or that such as they have were accommodated. The Answer I have not seen, for—it is

[1] [Vacca Barlinghieri died at Pisa in 1826.]

[2] [A review of Mr. Hobhouse's "Letters written by an Englishman resident at Paris during the last Reign of the Emperor Napoleon." See *Quart. Rev.* vol. xiv. p. 443.]

[3] [Mr. Wedderburn Webster. See *ante*, p. 324.]

odd enough for people so intimate — but Mr. Hobhouse and I are very sparing of our literary confidences. For example, the other day he wished to have a MS. of the third canto to read over to his brother, &c., which was refused; — and I have never seen his journals, nor he mine — (I only kept the short one of the mountains for my sister) — nor do I think that hardly ever he or I saw any of the other's productions previous to their publication.

"The article in the Edinburgh Review on Coleridge I have not seen; but whether I am attacked in it or not, or in any other of the same journal, I shall never think ill of Mr. Jeffrey on that account, nor forget that his conduct towards me has been certainly most handsome during the last four or more years.

"I forgot to mention to you that a kind of Poem in dialogue [1] (in black verse) or Drama, from which 'The Incantation' is an extract, begun last summer in Switzerland, is finished; it is in three acts; but of a very wild, metaphysical, and inexplicable kind. Almost all the persons — but two or three — are spirits of the earth and air, or the waters; the scene is in the Alps; the hero a kind of magician, who is tormented by a species of remorse, the cause of which is left half unexplained. He wanders about invoking these spirits, which appear to him, and are of no use; he at last goes to the very abode of the Evil Principle *in propriâ personâ*, to evocate a ghost, which appears, and gives him an ambiguous and disagreeable answer; and in the third act he is found by his attendants dying in a tower where he had studied his art. You may perceive by this outline that I have no great opinion of this piece of fantasy; but I have at least rendered it *quite impossible* for the stage, for which my intercourse with Drury Lane has given me the greatest contempt.

"I have not even copied it off, and feel too lazy at present to attempt the whole; but when I have, I will send it you, and you may either throw it into the fire or not."

LETTER 262. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, February 25. 1817.

"I wrote to you the other day in answer to your letter; at present I would trouble you with a commission, if you would be kind enough to undertake it.

"You, perhaps, know Mr. Love, the jeweller, of Old Bond Street? In 1813, when in the intention of returning to Turkey, I purchased of him, and paid (*argent comptant*) for about a dozen snuff-boxes, of more or less value, as presents for some of my Mussulman acquaintance. These I have now with me. The other day, having occasion to make an alteration in the lid of one (to place a portrait in it), it has turned out to be *silver-gilt* instead of *gold*, for which last it was sold and paid for. This was discovered by the workman in trying it, before taking off the hinges and working upon the lid. I have of course recalled and preserved the box *in statu quo*. What I wish you to do is, to see the said Mr. Love, and inform him of this circumstance, adding, from me, that I will take care he shall not have done this with impunity.

"If there is no remedy in law, there is at least the equitable one of making known his *guilt*, — that is, his silver-*gilt*, and be d—d to him.

"I shall carefully preserve all the purchases I made of him on that occasion for my return, as the plague in Turkey is a barrier to travelling there at present, or rather the endless quarantine which would be the consequence before one could land in coming back. Pray state the matter to him with due ferocity.

"I sent you the other day some extracts from a kind of Drama which I had begun in Switzerland and finished here; you will tell me if they are received. They were only in a letter. I have not yet had energy to copy it out, or I would send you the whole in different covers.

"The Carnival closed this day last week.

"Mr. Hobhouse is still at Rome, I believe. I am at present a little unwell; — sitting up too late and some subsidiary dissipations have lowered my blood a good deal; but I have at present the quiet and temperance of Lent before me.

"Believe me, &c.

"P. S. — Remember me to Mr. Gifford. — I have not received your parcel or parcels. — Look into 'Moore's (Dr. Moore's) View of Italy' for me; in one of the volumes you will find an account of the *Doge Valiere* (it ought to be Falieri) and his conspiracy, or the motives of it. Get it transcribed for me, and send it in a letter to me soon. I want it, and cannot find so good an account of that business here; though the veiled patriot, and the place where he was once crowned, and afterwards decapitated, still exist and are shown. I have searched all their histories; but the policy of the old aristocracy made their writers silent on his motives, which were a private grievance against one of the patricians.

[1] Manfred.

"I mean to write a tragedy on the subject, which appears to me very dramatic; an old man, jealous, and conspiring against the state of which he was the actually reigning chief. The last circumstance makes it the most remarkable and only fact of the kind in all history of all nations."

LETTER 263. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, February 28. 1817.

"You will, perhaps, complain as much of the frequency of my letters now, as you were wont to do of their rarity. I think this is the fourth within as many moons. I feel anxious to hear from you, even more than usual, because your last indicated that you were unwell. At present, I am on the invalid regimen myself. The Carnival — that is, the latter part of it, and sitting up late o'nights, had knocked me up a little. But it is over, — and it is now Lent, with all its abstinence and sacred music.

"The mumming closed with a masked ball at the Fenice, where I went, as also to most of the ridottos, &c. &c.; and, though I did not dissipate much upon the whole, yet I find 'the sword wearing out the scabbard,' though I have but just turned the corner of twenty-nine.

"So, we'll go no more a roving
So late into the night,
Though the heart be still as loving,
And the moon be still as bright.
For the sword outwears its sheath,
And the soul wears out the breast,
And the heart must pause to breathe,
And Love itself have rest.
Though the night was made for loving,
And the day returns too soon,
Yet we'll go no more a roving
By the light of the moon.

"I have lately had some news of litter*atoor*, as I heard the editor of the Monthly pronounce it once upon a time. I hear that W. W. has been publishing and responding to the attacks of the Quarterly, in the learned Perry's Chronicle.[1] I read his poesies last autumn, and, amongst them found an epitaph on his bull-dog, and another on *myself*. But I beg leave to assure him (like the astrologer Partridge) that I am not only alive now, but was alive also at the time he wrote it. Hobhouse has (I hear, also) expectorated a letter against the Quarterly, addressed to me. I feel awkwardly situated between him and Gifford, both being my friends.

"And this is your month of going to press — by the body of Diana! (a Venetian oath,) I feel as anxious — but not fearful for you — as if it were myself coming out in a work of humour, which would, you know, be the antipodes of all my previous publications. I don't think you have any thing to dread but your own reputation. You must keep up to that. As you never showed me a line of your work, I do not even know your measure; but you must send me a copy by Murray forthwith, and then you shall hear what I think. I dare say you are in a pucker. Of all authors, you are the only really *modest* one I ever met with, — which would sound oddly enough to those who recollect your morals when you were young — that is, when you were *extremely* young — I don't mean to stigmatise you either with years or morality.

"I believe I told you that the E. R. had attacked me, in an article on Coleridge (I have not seen it) — '*Et tu*, Jeffrey?' — 'there is nothing but roguery in villanous man.' But I absolve him of all attacks, present and future; for I think he had already pushed his clemency in my behoof to the utmost, and I shall always think well of him. I only wonder he did not begin before, as my domestic destruction was a fine opening for all the world, of which all who could did well to avail themselves.

"If I live ten years longer, you will see, however, that it is not over with me — I don't mean in literature, for that is nothing; and it may seem odd enough to say, I do not think it my vocation. But you will see that I shall do something or other — the times and fortune permitting — that, 'like the cosmogony, or creation of the world, will puzzle the philosophers of all ages.' But I doubt whether my constitution will hold out. I have, at intervals, ex*or*cised it most devilishly.

"I have not yet fixed a time of return, but I think of the spring. I shall have been away a year in April next. You never mention Rogers, nor Hodgson, your clerical neighbour, who has lately got a living near you. Has he also got a child yet? — his desideratum, when I saw him last.

"Pray let me hear from you, at your time and leisure, believing me ever and truly and affectionately, &c."

LETTER 264. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, March 3. 1817.

"In acknowledging the arrival of the article from the 'Quarterly[2],' which I received two

[1] [See *antè*, p. 324.]

[2] An article in No. 31. of this Review, written, as Lord Byron afterwards discovered, by Sir Walter Scott, and well meriting, by the kind and generous spirit that breathes through it, the warm and lasting gratitude it awakened in the noble poet.

days ago, I cannot express myself better than in the words of my sister Augusta, who (speaking of it) says, that it is written in a spirit 'of the most feeling and kind nature.' It is, however, something more; it seems to me (as far as the subject of it may be permitted to judge) to be *very well* written as a composition, and I think will do the journal no discredit, because even those who condemn its partiality, must praise its generosity. The temptations to take another and a less favourable view of the question have been so great and numerous, that, what with public opinion, politics, &c. he must be a gallant as well as a good man, who has ventured in that place, and at this time, to write such an article even anonymously. Such things, however, are their own reward; and I even flatter myself that the writer, whoever he may be (and I have no guess), will not regret that the perusal of this has given me as much gratification as any composition of that nature could give, and more than any other has given,—and I have had a good many in my time of one kind or the other. It is not the mere praise, but there is a *tact* and a *delicacy* throughout, not only with regard to me, but to *others*, which, as it had not been observed *elsewhere*, I had till now doubted whether it could be observed *any where*.

"Perhaps some day or other you will know or tell me the writer's name. Be assured, had the article been a harsh one, I should not have asked it.

"I have lately written to you frequently, with *extracts*, &c., which I hope you have received, or will receive, with or before this letter. — Ever since the conclusion of the Carnival I have been unwell, (do not mention this, on any account, to Augusta, for if I grow worse, she will know it too soon, and if I get better, there is no occasion that she should know it at all,) and have hardly stirred out of the house. However, I don't want a physician; and if I did, very luckily those of Italy are the worst in the world, so that I should still have a chance. They have, I believe, one famous surgeon, Vacca, who lives at Pisa, who might be useful in case of dissection: — but he is some hundred miles off. My malady is a sort of lowish fever, originating from what my 'pastor and master,' Jackson, would call 'taking too much out of one's self.' However, I am better within this day or two.

"I missed seeing the new Patriarch's procession to St. Mark's the other day (owing to my indisposition), with six hundred and fifty priests in his rear — a 'goodly army.' The admirable government of Vienna, in its edict from thence, authorising his installation, prescribed, as part of the pageant, 'a *coach* and four horses.'[1] To show how very, very '*German* to the matter' this was, you have only to suppose our parliament commanding the Archbishop of Canterbury to proceed from Hyde Park Corner to St. Paul's Cathedral in the Lord Mayor's barge, or the Margate hoy. There is but St. Mark's Place in all Venice broad enough for a carriage to move, and it is paved with large smooth flagstones, so that the chariot and horses of Elijah himself would be puzzled to manœuvre upon it. Those of Pharaoh might do better; for the canals — and particularly the Grand Canal — are sufficiently capacious and extensive for his whole host. Of course, no coach could be attempted; but the Venetians, who are very naïve as well as arch, were much amused with the ordinance.

"The Armenian Grammar is published; but my Armenian studies are suspended for the present, till my head aches a little less. I sent you the other day, in two covers, the first act of 'Manfred,' a drama as mad as Nat. Lee's Bedlam tragedy, which was in 25 acts and some odd scenes: — mine is but in three acts.

"I find I have begun this letter at the wrong end: never mind; I must end it, then, at the right.

"Yours ever very truly and obligedly, &c.

"P. S. — Marianna is very well. She has been sitting for her picture for me — a miniature that is very like.

LETTER 265. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, March 9. 1817.

"In remitting the third act of the sort of dramatic poem of which you will by this time have received the two first (at least I hope so), which were sent within the last three weeks, I have little to observe, except that you must not publish it (if it ever is published) without giving me previous notice. I have really and truly no notion whether it is good or bad; and as this was not the case with the principal of my former publications, I am, therefore, inclined to rank it very humbly. You will submit it to Mr. Gifford, and to whomsoever you please besides. With regard to the question of copyright (if it ever comes to publication), I do not know whether you would think *three hundred*

[1] ["There are only eight horses in Venice: four are of brass, over the gate of the cathedral; and the other four are alive in Lord Byron's stables."—MATTHEWS: *Diary of an Invalid*, p. 263.]

guineas an over-estimate ; if you do, you may diminish it : I do not think it worth more ; so you may see I make some difference between it and the others.

"I have received your two Reviews (but not the 'Tales of my Landlord') ; the Quarterly I acknowledged particularly in a letter to you, on its arrival, ten days ago. What you tell me of Perry petrifies me ; it is a rank imposition. In or about February or March, 1816, I was given to understand that Mr. Croker was not only a coadjutor in the attacks of the Courier in 1814, but the author of some lines tolerably ferocious, then recently published in a morning paper. Upon this I wrote a reprisal. The whole of the lines I have forgotten, and even the purport of them I scarcely remember ; for on *your* assuring me that he was not, &c. &c., I put them into the *fire before your face*, and there *never was* but that *one rough* copy. Mr. Davies, the only person who ever heard them read, wanted a copy, which I refused. If, however, by some *impossibility*, which I cannot divine, the ghost of these rhymes should walk into the world, I never will deny what I have really written, but hold myself personally responsible for satisfaction, though I reserve to myself the right of disavowing all or any *fabrications*. To the previous facts you are a witness, and best know how far my recapitulation is correct ; and I request that you will inform Mr. Perry from me, that I wonder he should permit such an abuse of my name in his paper ; I say an *abuse*, because my absence, at least, demands some respect, and my presence and positive sanction could alone justify him in such a proceeding, even were the lines mine ; and if false, there are no words for him. I repeat to you that the original was burnt before you on your *assurance*, and there *never* was a *copy*, nor even a verbal repetition, — very much to the discomfort of some zealous Whigs, who bored me for them (having heard it bruited by Mr. Davies that there were such matters) to no purpose ; for, having written them solely with the notion that Mr. Croker was the aggressor, and for *my own* and not party reprisals, I would not lend me to the zeal of any sect when I was made aware that he was not the writer of the offensive passages. *You know*, if there was such a thing, I would not deny it. I mentioned it openly at the time to you, and you will remember why and where I destroyed it ; and no power nor wheedling on earth should have made, or could make, me (if I recollected them) give a copy after that, unless I was well assured that Mr. Croker was really the author of that which you assured me he was not.

"I intend for England this spring, where I have some affairs to adjust ; but the post hurries me. For this month past I have been unwell, but am getting better, and thinking of moving homewards towards May, without going to Rome, as the unhealthy season comes on soon, and I can return when I have settled the business I go upon, which need not be long. I should have thought the Assyrian tale very succeedable.

"I saw, in Mr. W. W.'s poetry, that he had written my epitaph ; I would rather have written his.

"The thing I have sent you, you will see at a glimpse, could never be attempted or thought of for the stage ; I much doubt it for publication even. It is too much in my old style ; but I composed it actually with a *horror* of the stage, and with a view to render the thought of it impracticable, knowing the zeal of my friends that I should try that for which I have an invincible repugnance, viz. a representation.

"I certainly am a devil of a mannerist, and must leave off ; but what could I do ? Without exertion of some kind, I should have sunk under my imagination and reality. My best respects to Mr. Gifford, to Walter Scott, and to all friends.

"Yours ever."

LETTER 266. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, March 10. 1817.

"I wrote again to you lately, but I hope you won't be sorry to have another epistle. I have been unwell this last month, with a kind of slow and low fever, which fixes upon me at night, and goes off in the morning ; but, however, I am now better. In spring it is probable we may meet ; at least I intend for England, where I have business, and hope to meet you in *your* restored health and additional laurels.

"Murray has sent me the Quarterly and the Edinburgh. When I tell you that Walter Scott is the author of the article in the former, you will agree with me that such an article is still more honourable to him than to myself. I am perfectly pleased with Jeffrey's also, which I wish you to tell him, with my remembrances — not that I suppose it is of any consequence to him, or ever could have been, whether I am pleased or not, but simply in my private relation to him, as his well-wisher, and it may be one day as his acquaintance. I wish you would also add, what you know, that I was not, and, indeed, am not even *now*, the misanthropical and gloomy gentleman he takes me for, but a facetious companion, well to do with those

with whom I am intimate, and as loquacious and laughing as if I were a much cleverer fellow.

"I suppose now I shall never be able to shake off my sables in public imagination, more particularly since my moral * * clove down my fame. However, nor that, nor more than that, has yet extinguished my spirit, which always rises with the rebound.

"At Venice we are in Lent, and I have not lately moved out of doors, my feverishness requiring quiet, and—by way of being more quiet—here is the Signora Marianna just come in and seated at my elbow.

"Have you seen * * * 's book of poesy? and, if you have seen it, are you not delighted with it? And have you—I really cannot go on: there is a pair of great black eyes looking over my shoulder, like the angel leaning over St. Matthew's, in the old frontispieces to the Evangelists,—so that I must turn and answer them instead of you.

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 267. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, March 25. 1817.

"I have at last learned, in default of your own writing (or *not* writing—which should it be? for I am not very clear as to the application of the word *default*) from Murray, two particulars of (or belonging to) you; one, that you are removing to Hornsey, which is, I presume, to be nearer London; and the other, that your poem is announced by the name of Lalla Rookh. I am glad of it,—first, that we are to have it at last, and next, I like a tough title myself—witness The Giaour and Childe Harold, which choked half the Blues at starting. Besides, it is the tail of Alcibiades's dog,—not that I suppose you want either dog or tail. Talking of tail, I wish you had not called it a '*Persian Tale*.'[1] Say a 'Poem' or 'Romance,' but not 'Tale.' I am very sorry that I called some of my own things 'Tales,' because I think that they are something better. Besides, we have had Arabian, and Hindoo, and Turkish, and Assyrian Tales. But, after all, this is frivolous in me; you won't, however, mind my nonsense.

"Really and truly, I want you to make a great hit, if only out of self-love, because we happen to be old cronies; and I have no doubt you will—I am sure you *can*. But you are, I'll be sworn, in a devil of a pucker; and *I* am *not* at your elbow, and Rogers *is*. I envy him; which is not fair, because he does not envy any body. Mind you send to me—that is, make Murray send—the moment you are forth.

"I have been very ill with a slow fever, which at last took to flying, and became as quick as need be.[2] But, at length, after a week of half-delirium, burning skin, thirst, hot headach, horrible pulsation, and no sleep, by the blessing of barley water, and refusing to see any physician, I recovered. It is an epidemic of the place, which is annual, and visits strangers. Here follow some versicles, which I made one sleepless night.

"I read the 'Christabel,'
Very well:
I read the 'Missionary;'
Pretty—very:
I tried at 'Ilderim;'
Ahem!
I read a sheet of 'Marg'ret of *Anjou*;'
Can you?
I turn'd a page of Webster's 'Waterloo;'
Pooh! pooh!
I look'd at Wordsworth's milk-white 'Rylstone Doe:'
Hillo!
&c. &c. &c.[3]

"I have not the least idea where I am going, nor what I am to do. I wished to have gone to Rome; but at present it is pestilent with English,—a parcel of staring boobies, who go about gaping and wishing to be at once cheap and magnificent. A man is a fool who travels now in France or Italy, till this tribe of wretches is swept home again. In two or three years the first rush will be over, and the Continent will be roomy and agreeable.

"I stayed at Venice chiefly because it is not one of their 'dens of thieves;' and here they but pause and pass. In Switzerland it was really noxious. Luckily, I was early, and had got the prettiest place on all the Lake before they were quickened into motion with the rest of the reptiles. But they crossed me every where. I met a family of children and old women half-way

[1] He had been misinformed on this point,—the work in question having been, from the first, entitled an "Oriental Romance." A much worse mistake (because wilful, and with no very charitable design) was that of certain persons, who would have it that the poem was meant to be epic!—Even Mr. D'Israeli has, for the sake of a theory, given in to this very gratuitous assumption:—"The Anacreontic poet," he says, "remains only Anacreontic in his Epic."

[2] In a note to Mr. Murray, subjoined to some corrections for Manfred, he says, "Since I wrote to you last, the *slow* fever I wot of thought proper to mend its pace, and became similar to one which I caught some years ago in the marshes of Elis, in the Morea."

[3] ["I read 'Glenarvon,' too, by Caro. Lamb——
God d—n!" *Orig. MS.*]

up the Wengen Alp (by the Jungfrau) upon mules, some of them too old and others too young to be the least aware of what they saw.

"By the way, I think the Jungfrau, and all that region of Alps, which I traversed in September — going to the very top of the Wengen, which is not the highest (the Jungfrau itself is inaccessible) but the best point of view — much finer than Mont-Blanc and Chamouni, or the Simplon. I kept a journal of the whole for my sister Augusta, part of which she copied and let Murray see.

"I wrote a sort of mad Drama, for the sake of introducing the Alpine scenery in description: and this I sent lately to Murray. Almost all the *dram. pers.* are spirits, ghosts, or magicians, and the scene is in the Alps and the other world, so you may suppose what a Bedlam tragedy it must be: make him show it you. I sent him all three acts piecemeal, by the post, and suppose they have arrived.

"I have now written to you at least six letters, or letter*ets*, and all I have received in return is a note about the length you used to write from Bury Street to St. James's Street, when we used to dine with Rogers, and talk laxly, and go to parties, and hear poor Sheridan now and then. Do you remember one night he was so tipsy, that I was forced to put his cocked hat on for him, — for he could not, — and I let him down at Brookes's, much as he must since have been let down into his grave. Heigh ho! I wish I was drunk — but I have nothing but this d—d barley-water before me.

"I am still in love, — which is a dreadful drawback in quitting a place, and I can't stay at Venice much longer. What I shall do on this point I don't know. The girl means to go with me, but I do not like this for her own sake. I have had so many conflicts in my own mind on this subject, that I am not at all sure they did not help me to the fever I mentioned above. I am certainly very much attached to her, and I have cause to be so, if you knew all. But she has a child; and though, like all the 'children of the sun,' she consults nothing but passion, it is necessary I should think for both; and it is only the virtuous, like ****, who can afford to give up husband and child, and live happy ever after.

"The Italian ethics are the most singular ever met with. The perversion, not only of action, but of reasoning, is singular in the women. It is not that they do not consider the thing itself as wrong, and very wrong, but *love* (the *sentiment* of love) is not merely an excuse for it, but makes it an *actual virtue*, provided it is disinterested, and not a *caprice*, and is confined to one object. They have awful notions of constancy; for I have seen some ancient figures of eighty pointed out as amorosi of forty, fifty, and sixty years' standing. I can't say I have ever seen a husband and wife so coupled.

"Ever, &c."

"P. S. — Marianna, to whom I have just translated what I have written on our subject to you, says — 'If you loved me thoroughly, you would not make so many fine reflections, which are only good *forbirsi i scarpi*,' — that is, 'to clean shoes withal,' — a Venetian proverb of appreciation, which is applicable to reasoning of all kinds."

LETTER 268. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, March 25. 1817.

"Your letter and enclosure are safe; but 'English gentlemen' are very rare — at least in Venice. I doubt whether there are at present any, save the consul and vice-consul, with neither of whom I have the slightest acquaintance. The moment I can pounce upon a witness, I will send the deed properly signed: but must he necessarily be genteel? Venice is not a place where the English are gregarious; their pigeon-houses are Florence, Naples, Rome, &c.; and to tell you the truth, this was one reason why I stayed here till the season of the purgation of Rome from these people, which is infected with them at this time, should arrive. Besides, I abhor the nation, and the nation me; it is impossible for me to describe my *own* sensation on that point, but it may suffice to say, that, if I met with any of the race in the beautiful parts of Switzerland, the most distant glimpse or aspect of them poisoned the whole scene, and I do not choose to have the Pantheon, and St. Peter's, and the Capitol, spoiled for me too. This feeling may be probably owing to recent events[1]; but it does not exist the less, and while it exists, I shall conceal it as little as any other.

"I have been seriously ill with a fever, but it is gone. I believe or suppose it was the indigenous fever of the place, which comes every year at this time, and of which the physicians change the name annually, to despatch the people sooner. It is a kind of typhus, and kills occasionally. It was pretty smart, but nothing particular, and has left me some debility and a great appetite. There

[1] ["And the destruction with which my moral Clytemnestra hewed me down; but," &c. — *MS.*]

are a good many ill at present, I suppose, of the same.

"I feel sorry for Horner, if there was any thing in the world to make him like it; and still more sorry for his friends, as there was much to make them regret him. I had not heard of his death till by your letter.[1]

"Some weeks ago I wrote to you my acknowledgments of Walter Scott's article. Now I know it to be his, it cannot add to my good opinion of him, but it adds to that of myself. *He*, and Gifford, and Moore, are the only *regulars* I ever knew who had nothing of the *garrison* about their manner: no nonsense, nor affectations, look you! As for the rest whom I have known, there was always more or less of the author about them — the pen peeping from behind the ear, and the thumbs a little inky, or so.

"'Lalla Rookh' — you must recollect that, in the way of title, the '*Giaour*' has never been pronounced to this day; and both it and Childe Harold sounded very facetious to the blue-bottles of wit and humour about town, till they were taught and startled into a proper deportment; and therefore Lalla Rookh, which is very orthodox and oriental, is as good a title as need be, if not better. I could wish rather that he had not called it 'a *Persian Tale*;' firstly, because we have had Turkish Tales, and Hindoo Tales, and Assyrian Tales, already; and *tale* is a word of which it repents me to have nicknamed poesy. 'Fable' would be better; and, secondly, 'Persian Tale' reminds one of the lines of Pope on Ambrose Phillips; though no one can say, to be sure, that this tale has been 'turned for half-a-crown[2]'; still it is as well to avoid such clashings. 'Persian *Story*' — why not? — or Romance?

I feel as anxious for Moore as I could do for myself, for the soul of me, and I would not have him succeed otherwise than splendidly, which I trust he will do.

"With regard to the 'Witch Drama,' I sent all the three acts by post, week after week, within this last month. I repeat that I have not an idea if it is good or bad. If bad, it must, on no account, be risked in publication; if good, it is at your service. I value it at *three hundred* guineas, or less, if you like it. Perhaps, if published, the best way will be to add it to your winter volume, and not publish separately. The price will show you I don't pique myself upon it; so speak out. You may put it in the fire, if you like, and Gifford don't like.

"The Armenian Grammar is published — that is, *one*; the other is still in MS. My illness has prevented me from moving this month past, and I have done nothing more with the Armenian.

"Of Italian or rather Lombard manners, I could tell you little or nothing: I went two or three times to the governor's conversazione, (and if you go once, you are free to go always,) at which, as I only saw very plain women, a formal circle, in short a *worse sort* of rout, I did not go again. I went to Academie and to Madame Albrizzi's, where I saw pretty much the same thing, with the addition of some literati, who are the same *blue*[3], by ——, all the world over. I fell in love the first week with Madame Segati, and I have continued so ever since, because she is very pretty and pleasing, and talks Venetian, which amuses me, and is naïve.

"Very truly, &c.

"P. S. — Pray send the red tooth-powder by a *safe hand*, and speedily.[4]

[1] [Francis Horner, Esq., M.P. for St. Mawes, died at Pisa in February, 1817, in his thirty-ninth year, and was interred in the Protestant burying-ground at Leghorn. Sir James Mackintosh, in his diary of the 6th of March, gives the following interesting account of what took place in the House of Commons on the motion for a new writ for St. Mawes: — "Lord Morpeth (now Earl of Carlisle) opened it in a speech so perfect, that it might have been placed as a passage in the most elegant English writer: it was full of feeling; every topic was skilfully presented, and contained by a sort of prudence which is a part of taste, within safe limits; he slid over the thinnest ice without cracking it. Canning filled well what would have been the vacant place of a calm observer of Horner's public life and talents. Manners Sutton's most affecting speech was a tribute of affection from a private friend become a political enemy; Lord Lascelles, at the head of the country gentlemen of England, closing this affecting, improving, and most memorable scene by declaring, 'that if the sense of the House could have been taken on this occasion, it would have been unanimous.' I may say, without exaggeration, that never were so many words uttered without the least suspicion of exaggeration; and that never was so much honour paid in any age or nation to intrinsic claims alone. A Howard introduced, and an English House of Commons adopted, the proposition of thus honouring the memory of a man of thirty-eight, the son of a shopkeeper, who never filled an office, or had the power of obliging a living creature, and whose grand title to this distinction was the belief of his virtue. How honourable to the age and to the House! A country where such sentiments prevail is not ripe for destruction." — *Life*, vol. ii. p. 339.]

[2] ["The bard whom pilfer'd pastorals renown,
Who turns a Persian tale for half a crown,
Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains, from hard-bound brains, eight lines a year.

"Ambrose Phillips translated a book called the 'Persian Tales,' a book full of fancy and imagination."— POPE.]

[3] Whenever a word or passage occurs (as in this instance) which Lord Byron would have pronounced emphatically in speaking, it appears, in his handwriting, as if written with something of the same vehemence.

[4] Here follow the same rhymes ("I read the Christabel," &c.) which have already been given in one of his letters to myself.

" To hook the reader, you, John Murray,
Have publish'd ' Anjou's Margaret,'
Which won't be sold off in a hurry
(At least, it has not been as yet) ;
And then, still further to bewilder him,
Without remorse you set up ' Ilderim ; '
So mind you don't get into debt,
Because as how, if you should fail,
These books would be but baddish bail.
And mind you do *not* let escape
These rhymes to Morning Post or Perry,
Which would be *very* treacherous — *very*,
And get me into such a scrape !
For, firstly, I should have to sally,
All in my little boat, against a *Gally ;*
And, should I chance to slay the Assyrian wight,
Have next to combat with the female knight.
And prick'd to death expire upon her needle,
A sort of end which I should take indeed ill !

" You may show these matters to Moore and the *select*, but not to the *profane ;* and tell Moore, that I wonder he don't write to one now and then."

LETTER 269. TO MR. MOORE.

" Venice, March 31. 1817.

" You will begin to think my epistolary offerings (to whatever altar you please to devote them) rather prodigal. But until you answer, I shall not abate, because you deserve no better. I know you are well, because I hear of your voyaging to London and the environs, which I rejoice to learn, because your note alarmed me by the purgation and phlebotomy therein prognosticated. I also hear of your being in the press ; all which, methinks, might have furnished you with subject-matter for a middle-sized letter, considering that I am in foreign parts, and that the last month's advertisements and obituary would be absolute news to me from your Tramontane country.

" I told you, in my last, I have had a smart fever. There is an epidemic in the place ; but I suspect, from the symptoms, that mine was a fever of my own, and had nothing in common with the low, vulgar typhus, which is at this moment decimating Venice, and which has half unpeopled Milan, if the accounts be true. This malady has sorely discomfited my serving men, who want sadly to be gone away, and get me to remove. But, besides my natural perversity, I was seasoned in Turkey, by the continual whispers of the plague, against apprehensions of contagion. Besides which, apprehension would not prevent it ; and then I am still in love, and ' forty thousand ' fevers should not make me stir before my minute, while under the influence of that paramount delirium. Seriously speaking, there is a malady rife in the city — a dangerous one, they say. However, mine did not appear so, though it was not pleasant.

" This is Passion-week — and twilight — and all the world are at vespers. They have an eternal churching, as in all Catholic countries, but are not so bigoted as they seem to be in Spain.

" I don't know whether to be glad or sorry that you are leaving Mayfield. Had I ever been at Newstead during your stay there, (except during the winter of 1813-14, when the roads were impracticable,) we should have been within hail, and I should like to have made a giro of the Peak with you. I know that country well, having been all over it when a boy. Was you ever in Dovedale ? I can assure you there are things in Derbyshire as noble as Greece or Switzerland. But you had always a lingering after London, and I don't wonder at it. I liked it as well as any body, myself, now and then.

" Will you remember me to Rogers ? whom I presume to be flourishing, and whom I regard as our poetical papa. You are his lawful son, and I the illegitimate. Has he begun yet upon Sheridan ? If you see our republican friend, Leigh Hunt, pray present my remembrances. I saw about nine months ago that he was in a row (like my friend Hobhouse) with the Quarterly Reviewers. For my part, I never could understand these quarrels of authors with critics and with one another. ' For God's sake, gentlemen, what do they mean ? '

" What think you of your countryman, Maturin ? I take some credit to myself for having done my best to bring out Bertram ; but I must say my colleagues were quite as ready and willing. Walter Scott, however, was the *first* who mentioned him, which he did to me, with great commendation, in 1815 ; and it is to this casualty, and two or three other accidents, that this very clever fellow owed his first and well-merited public success. What a chance is fame ?

" Did I tell you that I have translated two Epistles ? — a correspondence between St. Paul and the Corinthians, not to be found in our version, but the Armenian — but which seems to me very orthodox, and I have done it into scriptural prose English.[1]

" Ever, &c."

[1] The only plausible claim of these epistles to authenticity arises from the circumstance of St. Paul having (according to the opinion of Mosheim and others) written an epistle to the Corinthians, before that which we now call his first. They are, however, universally given up as spurious. Though frequently referred to as existing in the Armenian, by Primate Usher, Johan. Gregorius, and other learned men, they were for the first time, I believe, translated from that language by the two Whistons, who subjoined the correspondence, with a Greek and

LETTER 270. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 2. 1817.

"I sent you the whole of the Drama at *three several* times, act by act, in separate covers. I hope that you have, or will receive, some or the whole of it.

"So Love has a conscience. By Diana! I shall make him take back the box, though it were Pandora's. The discovery of its intrinsic silver occurred on sending it to have the lid adapted to admit Marianna's portrait. Of course I had the box remitted *in statu quo*, and had the picture set in another, which suits it (the picture) very well. The defaulting box is not touched, hardly, and was not in the man's hands above an hour.

"I am aware of what you say of Otway; and am a very great admirer of his, — all except of that maudlin b—h of chaste lewdness and blubbering curiosity, Belvidera, whom I utterly despise, abhor, and detest. But the story of Marino Faliero is different, and, I think, so much finer, that I wish Otway had taken it instead: the head conspiring against the body for refusal of redress for a real injury, — jealousy — treason, with the more fixed and inveterate passions (mixed with policy) of an old or elderly man — the devil himself could not have a finer subject, and he is your only tragic dramatist.

"There is still, in the Doge's palace, the black veil painted over Faliero's picture, and the staircase whereon he was first crowned Doge, and subsequently decapitated. This was the thing that most struck my imagination in Venice — more than the Rialto, which I visited for the sake of Shylock; and more, too, than Schiller's '*Armenian*,' a novel which took a great hold of me when a boy. It is also called the 'Ghost Seer,' and I never walked down St. Mark's by moonlight without thinking of it, and '*at nine o'clock he died!*'[1] — But I hate things *all fiction;* and therefore the *Merchant* and *Othello* have no great associations to me: but *Pierre* has. There should always be some foundation of fact for the most airy fabric, and pure invention is but the talent of a liar.

"Maturin's tragedy. — By your account of him last year to me, he seemed a bit of a coxcomb, personally. Poor fellow! to be sure, he had had a long seasoning of adversity, which is not so hard to bear as t'other thing. I hope that this won't throw him back into the 'slough of Despond.'[2]

"You talk of 'marriage;' — ever since my own funeral, the word makes me giddy, and throws me into a cold sweat. Pray, don't repeat it.

"You should close with Madame de Stael. This will be her best work, and permanently historical; it is on her father, the Revolution, and Buonaparte, &c. Bonstetten told me in Switzerland it was *very great*. I have not seen it myself, but the author often. She was very kind to me at Copet.

"There have been two articles in the Venice papers, one a Review of Glenarvon, Caroline Lamb's, and the other a Review of Childe Harold, in which it proclaims me the most rebellious and contumacious admirer of Buonaparte now surviving in Europe. Both these articles are translations from the Literary Gazette of German Jena.

"Tell me that Walter Scott is better. I would not have him ill for the world. I suppose it was by sympathy that I had my fever at the same time.

"I joy in the success of your Quarterly, but I must still stick by the Edinburgh; Jeffery has done so by me, I must say, through every thing, and this is more than I deserved from him. I have more than once acknowledged to you by letter the 'Article' (and articles); say that you have received the said letters, as I do not otherwise know what letters arrive. Both Reviews came, but nothing more. M.'s play and the extract not yet come.

"Write to say whether my Magician has arrived, with all his scenes, spells, &c.

"Yours ever, &c.

"It is useless to send to the *Foreign Office:* nothing arrives to me by that con-

Latin version, to their edition of the Armenian History of Moses of Chorene, published in 1736.

The translation by Lord Byron is, as far as I can learn, the first that has ever been attempted in English; and as, proceeding from *his* pen, it must possess, of course, additional interest, the reader will not be displeased to find it in the Appendix. Annexed to the copy in my possession are the following words in his own handwriting: — "Done into English by me, January, February, 1817, at the Convent of San Lazaro, with the aid and exposition of the Armenian text by the Father Paschal Aucher, Armenian friar. — BYRON. I had also (he adds) the Latin text, but it is in many places very corrupt, and with great omissions."

[1] ["Who answer'd me just now? Who, when I said '*Tis nine*, turn'd round and said so solemnly *Signor, he died at nine!* —'Twas the Armenian; The mask that follows thee, go where thou wilt."
Rogers's Italy, p. 62.]

[2] ["Let him take heart — 'whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' This sentence, by the way, is a contrast to the other one of 'Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat,' which may be thus done into English: —

"God maddens him whom 'tis his will to love,
And gives the choice of death or phrenzy — choose."
MS.]

veyance. I suppose some zealous clerk thinks it a Tory duty to prevent it."

LETTER 271. TO MR. ROGERS.

"Venice, April 4. 1817.

"It is a considerable time since I wrote to you last, and I hardly know why I should trouble you now, except that I think you will not be sorry to hear from me now and then. You and I were never correspondents, but always something better, which is, very good friends.

"I saw your friend Sharp in Switzerland, or rather in the German *territory* (which is and is not Switzerland), and he gave Hobhouse and me a very good route for the Bernese Alps; however we took another from a German, and went by Clarens, the Dent de Jaman to Montbovon, and through Simmenthal to Thoun, and so on to Lauterbroun; except that from thence to the Grindlewald, instead of round about, we went right over the Wengen Alps' very summit, and being close under the Jungfrau, saw it, its glaciers, and heard the avalanches in all their glory, having famous weather there*for*. We of course went from the Grindlewald over the Sheidech to Brientz and its lake; past the Reichenbach and all that mountain road, which reminded me of Albania and Ætolia and Greece, except that the people here were more civilised and rascally. I do not think so very much of Chamouni (except the source of the Arveron, to which we went up to the teeth of the ice, so as to look into and touch the cavity, against the warning of the guides, only one of whom would go with us so close,) as of the Jungfrau, and the Pissevache, and Simplon, which are quite out of all mortal competition.

"I was at Milan about a moon, and saw Monti and some other living curiosities, and thence on to Verona, where I did not forget your story of the assassination during your sojourn there, and brought away with me some fragments of Juliet's tomb, and a lively recollection of the amphitheatre. The Countess Goetz (the governor's wife here) told me that there is still a ruined castle of the Montecchi between Verona and Vicenza. I have been at Venice since November, but shall proceed to Rome shortly. For my deeds here, are they not written in my letters to the unreplying Thomas Moore? to him I refer you: he has received them all, and not answered one.

"Will you remember me to Lord and Lady Holland? I have to thank the former for a book which I have not yet received, but expect to reperuse with great pleasure on my return, viz. the second edition of Lope de Vega. I have heard of Moore's forthcoming poem: he cannot wish himself more success than I wish and augur for him. I have also heard great things of 'Tales of my Landlord,' but I have not yet received them; by all accounts they beat even Waverley, &c., and are by the same author. Maturin's second tragedy has, it seems, failed, for which I should think any body would be sorry. My health was very victorious till within the last month, when I had a fever. There is a typhus in these parts, but I don't think it was that. However, I got well without a physician or drugs.

"I forgot to tell you that, last autumn, I furnished Lewis with 'bread and salt' for some days at Diodati, in reward for which (besides his conversation) he translated 'Goethe's Faust' to me by word of mouth, and I set him by the ears with Madame de Stael about the slave trade. I am indebted for many and kind courtesies to our Lady of Copet, and I now love her as much as I always did her works, of which I was and am a great admirer. When are you to begin with Sheridan? What are you doing, and how do you do?

"Ever very truly, &c."

CHAPTER XXX.

1817.

VENICE.—LETTERS TO MURRAY AND MOORE.—ANECDOTES.—DE LUC, THE NONAGENARIAN.—VISIT TO THE MANFRINI PALACE.—PAINTING.—A DAY AT FLORENCE: THE GALLERIES; THE MEDICI CHAPEL; SANTA CROCE.—THE LAMENT OF TASSO WRITTEN.—A FEW DAYS AT ROME.—ANECDOTES.—NEW THIRD ACT OF MANFRED WRITTEN.—RETURN TO VENICE.—PINDEMONTE.—MATURIN'S TRAGEDY.

LETTER 272. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 9. 1817.

"YOUR letters of the 18th and 20th are arrived. In my own I have given you the rise, progress, decline, and fall of my recent malady. It is gone to the devil: I won't pay him so bad a compliment as to say it came from him;—he is too much of a gentleman. It was nothing but a slow fever, which quickened its pace towards the end of its journey.

I had been bored with it some weeks — with nocturnal burnings and morning perspirations; but I am quite well again, which I attribute to having had neither medicine nor doctor thereof.

"In a few days I set off for Rome: such is my purpose. I shall change it very often before Monday next, but do you continue to direct and address to *Venice*, as heretofore. If I go, letters will be forwarded: I say '*if*,' because I never know what I shall do till it is done; and as I mean most firmly to set out for Rome, it is not unlikely I may find myself at St. Petersburg.

"You tell me to 'take care of myself;'— faith, and I will. I won't be posthumous yet, if I can help it. Notwithstanding, only think what a 'Life and Adventures,' while I am in full scandal, would be worth, together with the 'membra' of my writing-desk, the sixteen beginnings of poems never to be finished! Do you think I would not have shot myself last year, had I not luckily recollected that Mrs. C * * [Clermont], and Lady N * * [Noel], and all the old women in England would have been delighted; — besides the agreeable 'Lunacy,' of the 'Crowner's Quest,' and the regrets of two or three or half a dozen? Be assured that I *would live* for two reasons, or more; — there are one or two people whom I have to put out of the world, and as many into it, before I can 'depart in peace;' if I do so before, I have not fulfilled my mission. Besides, when I turn thirty, I will turn devout; I feel a great vocation that way in Catholic churches, and when I hear the organ.

"So Wedderburn Webster is writing again! Is there no Bedlam in Scotland? nor thumb-screw? nor gag? nor handcuff? I went upon my knees to him almost, some years ago, to prevent him from publishing a political pamphlet, which would have given him a livelier idea of 'Habeas Corpus' than the world will derive from his present production upon that suspended subject, which will doubtless be followed by the suspension of other (his Majesty's) subjects.

"I condole with Drury Lane, and rejoice with Sotheby, — that is, in a modest way, — on the tragical end of the new tragedy. [1]

"You and Leigh Hunt have quarrelled then, it seems? I introduce him and his poem to you, in the hope that (malgré politics) the union would be beneficial to both, and the end is eternal enmity; and yet I did this with the best intentions: I introduce Coleridge, and Christabel runs away with your money; my friend Hobhouse quarrels, too, with the Quarterly: and (except the last) I am the innocent Isthmus (damn the word! I can't spell it, though I have crossed that of Corinth a dozen times) of these enmities.

"I will tell you something about Chillon. — A Mr. *De Luc*, ninety years old, a Swiss, had it read to him, and is pleased with it, — so my sister writes. He said that he was *with Rousseau* at *Chillon*, and that the description is perfectly correct. But this is not all: I recollected something of the name, and find the following passage in 'The Confessions,' vol. iii. page 247. liv. viii.: —

"'De tous ces amusemens celui qui me plût davantage fut une promenade autour du Lac, que je fis en bateau avec *De Luc* père, sa bru, ses *deux fils*, et ma Thérèse. Nous mîmes sept jours à cette tournée par le plus beau temps du monde. J'en gardai le vif souvenir des sites qui m'avoient frappé à l'autre extrémité du Lac, et dont je fis la description, quelques années après, dans la Nouvelle Héloise.'

"This nonagenarian, De Luc, must be one of the 'deux fils.' He is in England — infirm, but still in faculty. [2] It is odd that he should have lived so long, and not wanting in oddness that he should have made this voyage with Jean Jacques, and afterwards, at such an interval, read a poem by an Englishman (who had made precisely the same circumnavigation) upon the same scenery.

"As for 'Manfred,' it is of no use sending *proofs*; nothing of that kind comes. I sent the whole at different times. The two first acts are the best; the third so so; but I was blown with the first and second heats. You must call it 'a Poem,' for it is *no Drama*, and I do not choose to have it called by so Sotheby-ish a name — a 'Poem in dialogue,' or — Pantomime, if you will; any thing but a green-room synonyme; and this is your motto —

"'There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.'

"Yours ever, &c.

"My love and thanks to Mr. Gifford." [3]

[1] [Maturin's tragedy of "Manuel," which had been damned at Drury Lane in the preceding month.]

[2] [This amiable man died at Windsor in the November following, at the age of ninety-one. He was born at Geneva in 1726, and was many years reader to Queen Charlotte. His principal works were a treatise on Geology, and six volumes of Geological Travels.]

[3] ["Don't forget my tooth-powder. It is of no use to send it by the damned and double-damned conveyances, but by some private hand. I mean to be in Venice again in July. Nothing yet whatever from the Foreign Office. Why do you send any thing to such a 'den of thieves' as that? — *MS.*]

LETTER 273. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, April 11. 1817.

"I shall continue to write to you while the fit is on me, by way of penance upon you for your former complaints of long silence. I dare say you would blush, if you could, for not answering. Next week I set out for Rome. Having seen Constantinople, I should like to look at t'other fellow. Besides, I want to see the Pope, and shall take care to tell him that I vote for the Catholics and no Veto.

"I sha'n't go to Naples. It is but the second best sea-view, and I have seen the first and third, viz. Constantinople and Lisbon, (by the way, the last is but a river-view; however, they reckon it after Stamboul and Naples, and before Genoa,) and Vesuvius is silent, and I have passed by Ætna. So I shall e'en return to Venice in July; and if you write, I pray you to address to Venice, which is my head, or rather my *heart*, quarters.

"My late physician, Dr. Polidori, is here on his way to England, with the present Lord Guilford[1] and the widow[2] of the late earl. Dr. Polidori has, just now, no more patients, because his patients are no more. He had lately three, who are now all dead — one embalmed. Horner and a child of Thomas Hope's are interred at Pisa and Rome. Lord Guilford[3] died of an inflammation of the bowels: so they took them out, and sent them (on account of their discrepancies), separately from the carcass, to England. Conceive a man going one way, and his intestines another, and his immortal soul a third! — was there ever such a distribution? One certainly has a soul; but how it came to allow itself to be enclosed in a body is more than I can imagine. I only know if once mine gets out, I'll have a bit of a tussle before I let it get in again to that or any other.

"And so poor dear Mr. Maturin's second tragedy has been neglected by the discerning public! Sotheby will be d—d glad of this, and d—d without being glad, if ever his own plays come upon 'any stage.'

"I wrote to Rogers the other day, with a message for you. I hope that he flourishes. He is the Tithonus of poetry — immortal already. You and I must wait for it.

"I hear nothing — know nothing. You may easily suppose that the English don't seek me, and I avoid them. To be sure, there are but few or none here, save passengers. Florence and Naples are their Margate and Ramsgate, and much the same sort of company too, by all accounts, which hurts us among the Italians.

"I want to hear of Lalla Rookh—are you out? Death and fiends! why don't you tell me where you are, what you are, and how you are? I shall go to Bologna by Ferrara, instead of Mantua: because I would rather see the cell where they caged Tasso, and where he became mad and * *, than his own MSS. at Modena, or the Mantuan birthplace of that harmonious plagiary and miserable flatterer, whose cursed hexameters were drilled into me at Harrow.[4] I saw Verona and Vicenza on my way here — Padua too.

"I go *alone*, — but *alone*, because I mean to return here. I only want to see Rome. I have not the least curiosity about Florence, though I must see it for the sake of the Venus, &c. &c.; and I wish also to see the Fall of Terni. I think to return to Venice by Ravenna and Rimini, of both of which I mean to take notes for Leigh Hunt, who will be glad to hear of the scenery of his Poem. There was a devil of a review of him in the Quarterly[5], a year ago, which he answered. All answers are imprudent: but, to be sure, poetical flesh and blood must have the last word — that's certain. I thought, and think, very highly of his Poem; but I warned him of the row his favourite antique phraseology would bring him into.

"You have taken a house at Hornsey: I had much rather you had taken one in the Apennines. If you think of coming out for

[1] [Frederick North, fifth Earl of Guilford. This amiable nobleman was the third and youngest son of Lord North. While governor of Ceylon, he made the tour of the island, accompanied by the Rev. James Cordiner, who, in 1807, published a "Description of Ceylon," in two volumes quarto. Having subsequently been sent by government on a mission to the Ionian Islands, his liberal efforts introduced there a system of education, which has been productive of the most beneficial results. His Lordship died in London, October 1828.]

[2] [Daughter of Thomas Boycott, Esq., of Rudge-Hall, Salop.]

[3] [Francis North, fourth Earl of Guilford, was the second son of Lord North. When a young man, he was known by the appellation of "Honest Frank North," among all his acquaintances. He was greatly attached to theatrical performances, and in 1808 published a play called "The Kentish Barons." "He possessed," says Sir Egerton Brydges, "the hereditary talents and love of literature of his family; and, what is better, that hereditary good-nature, benevolence, freedom from guile, openness and liberality, which have for ages given a peculiar tincture to his family." He died at Pisa in January, 1817.]

[4] [—— "I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The *drill'd* dull lesson, forc'd down word by word
In my repugnant youth."
Childe Harold, c. iv. st. 75.]

[5] [See Quart. Rev. vol. xiv. p. 473.]

a summer, or so, tell me, that I may be upon the hover for you.

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 274. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 14. 1817.

"By the favour of Dr. Polidori, who is here on his way to England with the present Lord Guilford, (the late earl having gone to England by another road, accompanied by his bowels in a separate coffer,) I remit to you, to deliver to Mrs. Leigh, *two miniatures;* but previously you will have the goodness to desire Mr. Love (as a peace-offering between him and me) to set them in plain gold, with my arms complete, and 'Painted by Prepiani — Venice, 1817,' on the back. I wish also that you would desire Holmes to make a copy of *each* — that is, both — for myself, and that you will retain the said copies till my return. One was done while I was very unwell; the other in my health, which may account for their dissimilitude. I trust that they will reach their destination in safety.

"I recommend the Doctor to your good offices with your government friends; and if you can be of any use to him in a literary point of view, pray be so.

"To-day, or rather yesterday, for it is past midnight, I have been up to the battlements of the highest tower in Venice [1], and seen it and its view, in all the glory of a clear Italian sky. I also went over the Manfrini Palace, famous for its pictures. Amongst them, there is a portrait of *Ariosto* by *Titian*, surpassing all my anticipation of the power of painting or human expression: it is the poetry of portrait, and the portrait of poetry. There was also one of some learned lady, centuries old, whose name I forget, but whose features must always be remembered. I never saw greater beauty, or sweetness, or wisdom: — it is the kind of face to go mad for, because it cannot walk out of its frame. There is also a famous dead Christ and live Apostles, for which Buonaparte offered in vain five thousand louis; and of which, though it is a capo d'opera of Titian, as I am no connoisseur, I say little, and thought less, except of one figure in it. There are ten thousand others, and some very fine Giorgiones amongst them, &c. &c. There is an original Laura and Petrarch, very hideous both. Petrarch has not only the dress, but the features and air of an old woman, and Laura looks by no means like a young one, or a pretty one. What struck me most in the general collection was the extreme resemblance of the style of the female faces in the mass of pictures, so many centuries or generations old to those you see and meet every day among the existing Italians. The queen of Cyprus and Giorgione's wife, particularly the latter [2], are Venetians as it were of yesterday; the same eyes and expression, and, to my mind, there is none finer.

"You must recollect, however, that I know nothing of painting; and that I detest it, unless it reminds me of something I have seen, or think it possible to see, for which reason I spit upon and abhor all the Saints and subjects of one half the impostures I see in the churches and palaces; and when in Flanders, I never was so disgusted in my life, as with Rubens and his eternal wives and infernal glare of colours, as they appeared to me; and in Spain I did not think much of Murillo and Velasquez. Depend upon it, of all the arts, it is the most artificial and unnatural, and that by which the nonsense of mankind is most imposed upon. [3] I never yet saw the picture or the statue which came a league within my conception or expectation; but I have seen many mountains, and seas, and rivers, and views, and two or three women, who went as far beyond it, — besides some horses; and a lion (at Veli Pacha's) in the Morea; and a tiger at supper in Exeter 'Change. [4]

"When you write, continue to address to me at *Venice*. Where do you suppose the books you sent to me are? At *Turin!* This comes of '*the Foreign Office*,' which is foreign enough, God knows, for any good it can be of to me, or any one else, and be

[1] ["Where Galileo used to hold commerce with the skies. It commands a fine panoramic view of Venice, and shows you all the details of this wonderful town, which rises out of the waters, like the ark of the deluge."— *Diary of an Invalid*, p. 262.]

[2] ["And when you to Manfrini's palace go,
That picture (howsoever fine the rest)
Is loveliest to my mind of all the show;
It may, perhaps, be also to your zest,
And that's the cause I rhyme upon it so:
'T is but a portrait of his son, and wife,
And self; but *such* a woman! love in life!"
Beppo, st. 13.]

[3] ["I leave to learned fingers and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable," &c.
Childe Harold, c. iv. st. 53.]

[4] ["Two nights ago I saw the tigers sup at Exeter 'Change. Except Veli Pacha's lion in the Morea, — who followed the Arab keeper like a dog, — the fondness of the hyæna for her keeper amused me most. Such a conversazione! — but the tiger talked too much."— *Byron Diary*, Nov. 14. 1813.]

d—d to it, to its last clerk and first charlatan, Castlereagh.

"This makes my hundreth letter at least.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 275. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 14. 1817.

"The present proofs (of the whole) begin only at the 17th page; but as I had corrected and sent back the first act, it does not signify.

"The third act is certainly d—d bad, and, like the Archbishop of Grenada's homily (which savoured of the palsy), has the dregs of my fever, during which it was written. It must on *no account* be published in its present state. I will try and reform it, or re-write it altogether; but the impulse is gone, and I have no chance of making any thing out of it. I would not have it published as it is on any account. The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this act I thought good myself; the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be, and I wonder what the devil possessed me.

"I am very glad indeed that you sent me Mr. Gifford's opinion without *deduction*. Do you suppose me such a booby as not to be very much obliged to him? or that in fact I was not, and am not, convinced and convicted in my conscience of this same overt act of nonsense?

"I shall try at it again: in the mean time, lay it upon the shelf (the whole Drama, I mean): but pray correct your copies of the first and second acts from the original MS.

"I am not coming to England; but going to Rome in a few days. I return to Venice in *June*; so, pray, address all letters, &c. to me *here*, as usual, that is, to *Venice*. Dr. Polidori this day left this city with Lord Guilford for England. He is charged with some books to your care (from me), and two miniatures also to the same address, *both* for my sister.

"Recollect *not* to publish, upon pain of I know not what, until I have tried again at the third act. I am not sure that I *shall* try, and still less that I shall succeed, if I do; but I am very sure, that (as it is) it is unfit for publication or perusal; and unless I can make it out to my own satisfaction, I won't have any part published.

"I write in haste, and after having lately written very often. "Yours, &c."

LETTER 276. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Foligno, April 26. 1817.

"I wrote to you the other day from Florence, inclosing a MS. entitled 'The Lament of Tasso.' It was written in consequence of my having been lately at Ferrara. In the last section of this MS. *but one* (that is, the penultimate), I think that I have omitted a line in the copy sent to you from Florence, viz. after the line —

"And woo compassion to a blighted name,

insert,

"Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.

The *context* will show you *the sense*, which is not clear in this quotation. *Remember, I write this in the supposition that you have received my Florentine packet.*

"At Florence I remained but a day, having a hurry for Rome, to which I am thus far advanced. However, I went to the two galleries, from which one returns drunk with beauty. The Venus is more for admiration than love[1]; but there are sculpture and painting, which for the first time at all gave me an idea of what people mean by their *cant*, and what Mr. Braham calls 'entusimusy' (*i. e.* enthusiasm) about those two most artificial of the arts. What struck me most were, the mistress of Raphael, a portrait; the mistress of Titian, a portrait; a Venus of Titian in the Medici gallery — *the* Venus; Canova's Venus also in the other gallery: Titian's mistress is also in the other gallery (that is, in the Pitti Palace gallery); the Parcæ of Michael Angelo, a picture; and the Antinous, the Alexander, and one or two not very decent groups in marble; the Genius of Death, a sleeping figure, &c. &c.

"I also went to the Medici chapel — fine frippery in great slabs of various expensive stones[2], to commemorate fifty rotten and forgotten carcasses. It is unfinished, and will remain so.

"The church of 'Santa Croce'[3] contains

[1] [——— "Within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail. * * *
"We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness."
Childe Harold, c. iv. st. 49, 50.]

[2] ["What is her pyramid of precious stones?
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes?" &c. *Ib.* st. 60.]

[3] [——— "Here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose." *Ib.* st. 54.]

much illustrious nothing. The tombs of Machiavelli, Michael Angelo, Galileo Galilei, and Alfieri, make it the Westminster Abbey of Italy. I did not admire *any* of these tombs — beyond their contents. That of Alfieri is heavy, and all of them seem to me overloaded. What is necessary but a bust and name? and perhaps a date? the last for the unchronological, of whom I am one. But all your allegory and eulogy is infernal, and worse than the long wigs of English numskulls upon Roman bodies in the statuary of the reigns of Charles II., William, and Anne.

"When you write, write to *Venice*, as usual; I mean to return there in a fortnight. I shall not be in England for a long time. This afternoon I met Lord and Lady Jersey, and saw them for some time: all well; children grown and healthy; she very pretty, but sunburnt; he very sick of travelling; bound for Paris. There are not many English on the move, and those who are mostly homewards. I shall not return till business makes me, being much better where I am in health, &c. &c.

"For the sake of my personal comfort, I pray you send me immediately *to Venice — mind, Venice* — viz. *Waites' tooth-powder, red*, a quantity; *calcined magnesia*, of the best quality, a quantity; and all this by safe, sure, and speedy means; and, by the Lord! do it.

"I have done nothing at Manfred's third act. You must wait; I'll have at it in a week or two, or so. "Yours ever, &c."

LETTER 277. TO MR. MURRAY.

Rome, May 5. 1817.

"By this post (or next at farthest) I send you, in two *other* covers, the new third act of 'Manfred.' I have re-written the greater part, and returned what is not altered in the *proof* you sent me. The Abbot is become a good man, and the Spirits are brought in at the death. You will find, I think, some good poetry in this new act, here and there; and if so, print it, without sending me farther proofs, *under Mr. Gifford's correction*, if he will have the goodness to overlook it. Address all answers to *Venice*, as usual; I mean to return there in ten days.

"'The Lament of Tasso,' which I sent from Florence, has, I trust, arrived: I look upon it as a 'these be good rhymes,' as Pope's papa said to him when he was a boy.[1] For the *two* — *it* and the Drama — you will disburse to me (*via* Kinnaird) *six* hundred guineas. You will perhaps be surprised that I set the same price upon this as upon the Drama; but, besides that I look upon it as *good*, I won't take less than three hundred guineas for any thing. The two together will make you a larger publication than the 'Siege' and 'Parisina;' so you may think yourself let off very easy; that is to say, if these poems are good for any thing, which I hope and believe.

"I have been some days in Rome the Wonderful. I am seeing sights, and have done nothing else, except the new third act for you. I have this morning seen a live pope and a dead cardinal: Pius VII. has been burying Cardinal Bracchi, whose body I saw in state at the Chiesa Nuova. Rome has delighted me beyond every thing, since Athens and Constantinople. But I shall not remain long this visit. Address to Venice.

"Ever, &c.

"P. S. — I have got my saddle-horses here, and have ridden, and am riding, all about the country."

From the foregoing letters to Mr. Murray, we may collect some curious particulars respecting one of the most original and sublime of the noble poet's productions, the Drama of Manfred. His failure (and to an extent of which the reader shall be enabled presently to judge), in the completion of a design which he had, through two acts, so magnificently carried on, — the impatience with which, though conscious of this failure, he as usual hurried to the press, without deigning to woo, or wait for, a happier moment of inspiration, — his frank docility in, at once, surrendering up his third act to reprobation, without urging one parental word in its behalf, — the doubt he evidently felt, whether, from his habit of striking off these creations at a heat, he should be able to rekindle his imagination on the subject, — and then, lastly, the complete success with which, when his mind *did* make the spring, he at once cleared the whole space by which he before fell short of perfection, — all these circumstances, connected with the production of this grand poem, lay open to us features, both of his disposition and genius, in the highest degree interesting, and such as there is a pleasure, second only to that of perusing the poem itself, in contemplating.

As a literary curiosity, and, still more, as

[1] ["Pope's primary and principal purpose was to be a poet, with which his father accidentally concurred, by proposing subjects, and obliging him to correct his performances by many revisals; after which, the old gentleman, when he was satisfied, would say, '*these be good rhymes.*'"—JOHNSON.]

a lesson to genius, never to rest satisfied with imperfection or mediocrity, but to labour on till even failures are converted into triumphs, the third act, in its original shape, as first sent to the publisher, has been preserved in the recent editions of Lord Byron's Works.[1]

LETTER 278. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Rome, May 9. 1817.

"Address all answers to Venice; for there I shall return in fifteen days, God willing.

"I sent you from Florence 'The Lament of Tasso,' and from Rome the third act of Manfred, both of which, I trust, will duly arrive. The terms of these two I mentioned in my last, and will repeat in this: it is three hundred for each, or *six* hundred guineas for the two — that is, if you like, and they are good for any thing.

"At last one of the parcels is arrived. In the notes to Childe Harold there is a blunder of yours or mine: you talk of arrival at *St. Gingo*, and, immediately after, add — 'on the height is the Chateau of Clarens.' This is sad work: Clarens is on the *other* side of the lake, and it is quite impossible that I should have so bungled. Look at the MS.; and at any rate rectify it.

"The 'Tales of my Landlord' I have read with great pleasure, and perfectly understand now why my sister and aunt are so very positive in the very erroneous persuasion that they must have been written by me. If you knew me as well as they do, you would have fallen, perhaps, into the same mistake. Some day or other, I will explain to you *why* — when I have time; at present, it does not much matter; but you must have thought this blunder of theirs very odd, and so did I, till I had read the book. Croker's letter to you is a very great compliment; I shall return it to you in my next.

"I perceive you are publishing a Life of Raffael d'Urbino[2]: it may perhaps interest you to hear that a set of German artists here allow their *hair* to grow, and trim it into *his fashion*, thereby drinking the cummin of the disciples of the old philosopher; if they would cut their hair, convert it into brushes, and paint like him, it would be more '*German* to the matter.'

"I'll tell you a story: the other day, a man here — an English — mistaking the statues of Charlemagne and Constantine, which are *equestrian*, for those of Peter and Paul, asked another *which* was Paul of these same horsemen? — to which the reply was, — 'I thought, sir, that St. Paul had never got on horseback since his *accident?*'

"I'll tell you another: Henry Fox, writing to some one from Naples the other day, after an illness, adds — 'and I am so changed, that my *oldest creditors* would hardly know me.'

"I am delighted with Rome — as I would be with a bandbox, that is, it is a fine thing to see, finer than Greece; but I have not been here long enough to affect it as a residence, and I must go back to Lombardy, because I am wretched at being away from Marianna. I have been riding my saddle-horses every day, and been to Albano, its lakes, and to the top of the Alban Mount, and to Frescati, Aricia, &c. &c. with an &c. &c. &c. about the city, and in the city: for all which — vide Guide-book. As a whole, ancient and modern, it beats Greece, Constantinople, every thing — at least that I have ever seen. But I can't describe, because my first impressions are always strong and confused, and my memory *selects* and reduces them to order, like distance in the landscape, and blends them better, although they may be less distinct. There must be a sense or two more than we have, us mortals; for where there is much to be grasped we are always at a loss, and yet feel that we ought to have a higher and more extended comprehension.

"I have had a letter from Moore, who is in some alarm about his poem. I don't see why.

"I have had another from my poor dear Augusta, who is in a sad fuss about my late illness; do, pray, tell her (the truth) that I am better than ever, and in importunate health, growing (if not grown) large and ruddy, and congratulated by impertinent persons on my robustious appearance, when I ought to be pale and interesting.

"You tell me that George Byron has got a son, and Augusta says a daughter; which is it? — it is no great matter: the father is a good man, an excellent officer, and has married a very nice little woman[3], who will bring him more babes than income; howbeit she had a handsome dowry, and is a

[1] [See Works, p. 187.]

[2] [By Richard Duppa, F.S.A., author of the "Life and Literary Works of Michael Angelo Buonarotti," "Travels in Italy, Sicily, and the Lipary Islands," &c. &c. He died in 1831.]

[3] [George-Anson Byron, the present Lord, married, in 1816, Elizabeth-Mary, daughter of Sacheverell Chandos Pole, Esq. of Radborne, Derbyshire. The child here spoken of is Mary-Anne, married, in 1834, to John Blenkinsopp Coulson, Esq. of Blenkinsopp Castle.]

very charming girl; — but he may as well get a ship.

"I have no thoughts of coming amongst you yet awhile, so that I can fight off business. If I could but make a tolerable sale of Newstead, there would be no occasion for my return; and I can assure you very sincerely, that I am much happier (or, at least, have been so) out of your island than in it. "Yours ever.

"P. S. — There are few English here, but several of my acquaintance; amongst others, the Marquis of Lansdowne, with whom I dine to-morrow. I met the Jerseys on the road at Foligno — all well.

"Oh — I forgot — the Italians have printed Chillon, &c. a *piracy*, — a pretty little edition, prettier than yours — and published, as I found to my great astonishment on arriving here; and what is odd, is, that the English is quite correctly printed. Why they did it, or who did it, I know not; but so it is; — I suppose, for the English people. I will send you a copy."

LETTER 279. TO MR. MOORE.

"Rome, May 12. 1817.

"I have received your letter here, where I have taken a cruise lately; but I shall return back to Venice in a few days, so that if you write again, address there, as usual. I am not for returning to England so soon as you imagine; and by no means at all as a residence. If you cross the Alps in your projected expedition, you will find me somewhere in Lombardy, and very glad to see you. Only give me a word or two beforehand, for I would readily diverge some leagues to meet you.

"Of Rome I say nothing; it is quite indescribable, and the Guide-book is as good as any other. I dined yesterday with Lord Lansdowne, who is on his return. But there are few English here at present; the winter is *their* time. I have been on horseback most of the day, all days since my arrival, and have taken it as I did Constantinople. But Rome is the elder sister, and the finer. I went some days ago to the top of the Alban Mount, which is superb. As for the Coliseum, Pantheon, St. Peter's, the Vatican, Palatine, &c. &c. — as I said, vide Guide-book. They are quite inconceivable, and must *be seen*. The Apollo Belvidere is the image of Lady Adelaide Forbes — I think I never saw such a likeness.

"I have seen the Pope alive, and a cardinal dead, — both of whom looked very well indeed. The latter was in state in the Chiesa Nuova, previous to his interment.

"Your poetical alarms are groundless; go on and prosper. Here is Hobhouse just come in, and my horses at the door; so that I must mount and take the field in the Campus Martius, which, by the way, is all built over by modern Rome.

"Yours very and ever, &c.

"P. S. — Hobhouse presents his remembrances, and is eager, with all the world, for your new poem."

LETTER 280. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, May 30. 1817.

"I returned from Rome two days ago, and have received your letter; but no sign nor tidings of the parcel sent through Sir C. Stuart, which you mention. After an interval of months, a packet of 'Tales,' &c. found me at Rome; but this is all, and may be all that ever will find me. The post seems to be the only sure conveyance; and *that only for letters*. From Florence I sent you a poem on Tasso, and from Rome the new third act of 'Manfred,' and by Dr. Polidori two portraits for my sister. I left Rome, and made a rapid journey home. You will continue to direct here as usual. Mr. Hobhouse is gone to Naples: I should have run down there too for a week, but for the quantity of English whom I heard of there. I prefer hating them at a distance; unless an earthquake, or a good real irruption of Vesuvius, were ensured to reconcile me to their vicinity.

"The day before I left Rome I saw three robbers guillotined. The ceremony — including the *masqued* priests; the half-naked executioners; the bandaged criminals; the black Christ and his banner; the scaffold; the soldiery; the slow procession, and the quick rattle and heavy fall of the axe; the splash of the blood, and the ghastliness of the exposed heads — is altogether more impressive than the vulgar and ungentlemanly dirty 'new drop,' and dog-like agony of infliction upon the sufferers of the English sentence. Two of these men behaved calmly enough, but the first of the three died with great terror and reluctance. What was very horrible, he would not lie down; then his neck was too large for the aperture, and the priest was obliged to drown his exclamations by still louder exhortations. The head was off before the eye could trace the blow; but from an attempt to draw back the head, notwithstanding it was held forward by the hair, the first head was cut off close to the ears: the other two were taken off more cleanly. It is better than the oriental way, and (I should think) than the axe of

our ancestors. The pain seems little; and yet the effect to the spectator, and the preparation to the criminal, are very striking and chilling. The first turned me quite hot and thirsty, and made me shake so that I could hardly hold the opera-glass (I was close, but was determined to see, as one should see every thing, once, with attention); the second and third (which shows how dreadfully soon things grow indifferent), I am ashamed to say, had no effect on me as a horror, though I would have saved them if I could.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 281. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, June 4. 1817.

"I have received the proofs of the 'Lament of Tasso,' which makes me hope that you have also received the reformed third act of Manfred, from Rome, which I sent soon after my arrival there. My date will apprise you of my return home within these few days. For me, I have received *none* of your packets, except, after long delay, the 'Tales of my Landlord,' which I before acknowledged. I do not at all understand the *why nots*, but so it is; no Manuel, no letters, no tooth-powder, no *extract* from Moore's Italy concerning Marino Faliero, no NOTHING — as a man hallooed out at one of Burdett's elections, after a long ululatus of 'No Bastille! No Governor Aris! No'— God knows who or what; — but his *ne plus ultra* was, 'No nothing!' — and my receipts of your packages amount to about his meaning. I want the extract from *Moore's* Italy very much, and the tooth-powder, and the magnesia; I don't care so much about the poetry, or the letters, or Mr. Maturin's by-Jasus tragedy. Most of the things sent by the post have come — I mean proofs and letters; therefore send me Marino Faliero by the post, in a letter.

"I was delighted with Rome, and was on horseback all round it many hours daily, besides in it the rest of my time, bothering over its marvels. I excursed and skirred the country round to Alba, Tivoli, Frescati, Licenza, &c. &c.; besides, I visited twice the Fall of Terni, which beats every thing.[1] On my way back, close to the temple by its banks, I got some famous trout out of the river Clitumnus — the prettiest little stream in all poesy[2], near the first post from Foligno and Spoletto. — I did not stay at Florence, being anxious to get home to Venice, and having already seen the galleries and other sights. I left my commendatory letters the evening before I went, so I saw nobody.

"To-day, Pindemonte, the celebrated poet of Verona, called on me; he is a little thin man, with acute and pleasing features; his address good and gentle; his appearance altogether very philosophical; his age about sixty, or more. He is one of their best going. I gave him *Forsyth*, as he speaks, or reads rather, a little English, and will find there a favourable account of himself. He enquired after his old Cruscan friends, Parsons, Greathead, Mrs. Piozzi, and Merry, all of whom he had known in his youth. I gave him as bad an account of them as I could, answering, as the false 'Solomon Lob' does to 'Totterton' in the farce, 'all gone dead,' and damned by a satire more than twenty years ago; that the name of their extinguisher was Gifford[3]; that they were but a sad set of scribes after all, and no great things in any other way. He seemed, as was natural, very much pleased with this account of his old acquaintances, and went away greatly gratified with that and Mr. Forsyth's sententious paragraph of applause in his own (Pindemonte's) favour. After having been a little libertine in his youth, he is grown devout, and takes prayers, and talks to himself, to keep off the devil; but for all that, he is a very nice little old gentleman.[4]

"I forgot to tell you that at Bologna (which is celebrated for producing popes, painters, and sausages) I saw an anatomical gallery, where there is a deal of waxwork, in which * *

[1] [——— "Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread — a matchless cataract,
Horribly beautiful!" — *Childe Harold*, c. iv. st. 71.]

[2] ["——— "The purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprophaned by slaughters—
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters."
Childe Harold, c. iv. st. 66.]

[3] [In his Baviad and Mæviad.]

[4] ["Verona," says Mr. Stewart Rose, "has been distinguished as the cradle of many illustrious men. There is one yet living,

"'Per cui la fama in te chiara risuona
Egregia, eccelsa, alma Verona.'

——— "'whose name,
August Verona, forms thy fairest fame.'

I mean Ippolito Pindemonte, a poet who has caught a portion of that sun, whose setting beams yet gild the horizon of Italy. Mr. Forsyth, our best Italian traveller, sums up the merits of this gentleman by saying, that he *thinks*, and makes his readers *think*. Were I confined to the same number of words, I should say that he *feels*, and makes his readers *feel*." — *Italy*, vol. i. p. 45. Pindemonte died at Verona in November 1828, in his seventy-sixth year.]

"I am sorry to hear of your row with Hunt; but suppose him to be exasperated by the Quarterly and your refusal to *deal;* and when one is angry and edites a paper, I should think the temptation too strong for literary nature, which is not always human. I can't conceive in what, and for what, he abuses you: what have you done? you are not an author, nor a politician, nor a public character; I know no scrape you have tumbled into. I am the more sorry for this, because I introduced you to Hunt, and because I believe him to be a good man; but till I know the particulars, I can give no opinion.

"Let me know about Lalla Rookh, which must be out by this time.

"I restore the proofs, but the *punctuation* should be corrected. I feel too lazy to have at it myself; so beg and pray Mr. Gifford for me. — Address to Venice. In a few days I go to my *villeggiatura*, in a casino near the Brenta, a few miles only on the main land. I have determined on another year, and *many years* of residence if I can compass them. Marianna is with me, hardly recovered of the fever, which has been attacking all Italy last winter. I am afraid she is a little hectic; but I hope the best. "Ever, &c.

"P. S.—Torwaltzen has done a bust of me at Rome for Mr. Hobhouse, which is reckoned very good. He is their best after Canova, and by some preferred to him.

"I have had a letter from Mr. Hodgson. He is very happy, has got a living, but not a child: if he had stuck to a curacy, babes would have come of course, because he could not have maintained them.

"Remember me to all friends, &c. &c.

"An Austrian officer, the other day, being in love with a Venetian, was ordered, with his regiment, into Hungary. Distracted between love and duty, he purchased a deadly drug, which dividing with his mistress, both swallowed. The ensuing pains were terrific, but the pills were purgative, and not poisonous, by the contrivance of the unsentimental apothecary; so that so much suicide was all thrown away. You may conceive the previous confusion and the final laughter; but the intention was good on all sides."

LETTER 282. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, June 8. 1817.

"The present letter will be delivered to you by two Armenian friars, on their way, by England, to Madras. They will also convey some copies of the grammar, which I think you agreed to take. If you can be of any use to them, either amongst your naval or East Indian acquaintances, I hope you will so far oblige me, as they and their order have been remarkably attentive and friendly towards me since my arrival at Venice. Their names are Father Sukias Somalian and Father Sarkis. Theodorosian. They speak Italian, and probably French, or a little English. Repeating earnestly my recommendatory request, believe me very truly, yours, "BYRON.

"Perhaps you can help them to their passage, or give or get them letters for India."

LETTER 283. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, June 14. 1817.

"I write to you from the banks of the Brenta, a few miles from Venice, where I have colonised for six months to come. Address, as usual, to Venice.

"Three months after date (17th March), —like the unnegotiable bill despondingly received by the reluctant tailor,— your despatch has arrived, containing the extract from Moore's Italy and Mr. Maturin's bankrupt tragedy. It is the absurd work of a clever man. I think it might have done upon the stage, if he had made Manuel (by some trickery, in a masque or vizor) fight his own battle, instead of employing Molineux as his champion; and, after the defeat of Torismond, have made him spare the son of his enemy, by some revulsion of feeling, not incompatible with a character of extravagant and distempered emotions. But as it is, what with the Justiza, and the ridiculous conduct of the whole *dram. pers.* (for they are all as mad as Manual, who surely must have had more interest with a corrupt bench than a distant relation and heir presumptive, somewhat suspect of homicide), I do not wonder at its failure. As a play, it is impracticable; as a poem, no great things. Who was the 'Greek that grappled with glory naked?' the Olympic wrestlers? or Alexander the Great, when he ran stark round the tomb of t'other fellow? or the Spartan who was fined by the Ephori for fighting without his armour? or who? And as to 'flaying off life like a garment,' helas! that's in Tom Thumb — see king Arthur's soliloquy: —

> "'Life's a mere rag, not worth a prince's wearing;
> I'll cast it off.'

And the stage-directions — 'Staggers among the bodies;' — the slain are too numerous, as well as the blackamoor knight-penitent being one too many: and De Zelos is such a shabby Monmouth Street villain, without any redeeming quality — Stap my vitals! Maturin seems to be declining into Nat. Lee. But let him try again; he has talent,

but not much taste. I 'gin to fear, or to hope, that Sotheby, after all, is to be the Eschylus of the age, unless Mr. Shiel be really worthy his success. The more I see of the stage, the less I would wish to have any thing to do with it; as a proof of which, I hope you have received the third act of Manfred, which will at least prove that I wish to steer very clear of the possibility of being put into scenery. I sent it from Rome.

"I returned the proof of Tasso. By the way, have you never received a translation of St. Paul which I sent you, *not* for publication, before I went to Rome?

"I am at present on the Brenta. Opposite is a Spanish marquis, ninety years old; next his casino is a Frenchman's,—besides the natives; so that, as somebody said the other day, we are exactly one of Goldoni's comedies (La Vedova Scaltra), where a Spaniard, English, and Frenchman are introduced: but we are all very good neighbours, Venetians, &c. &c. &c.

"I am just getting on horseback for my evening ride, and a visit to a physician, who has an agreeable family, of a wife and four unmarried daughters, all under eighteen, who are friends of Signora Segati and enemies to nobody. There are, and are to be, besides conversaziones and I know not what, a Countess Labbia's and I know not whom. The weather is mild; the thermometer 110 in the *sun* this day, and 80 odd in the shade. Yours, &c.

"N."

LETTER 284. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, June 17. 1817.

"It gives me great pleasure to hear of Moore's success, and the more so that I never doubted that it would be complete. Whatever good you can tell me of him and his poem will be most acceptable: I feel very anxious indeed to receive it. I hope that he is as happy in his fame and reward as I wish him to be; for I know no one who deserves both more—if any so much.

"Now to business; * * * * * * I say unto you, verily, it is not so; or, as the foreigner said to the waiter, after asking him to bring a glass of water, to which the man answered 'I will, sir,'—'You *will!*—G—d d—n,—I say, you *mush!*' And I will submit this to the decision of any person or persons to be appointed by both, on a fair examination of the circumstances of this as compared with the preceding publications. So there's for you. There is always some row or other previously to all our publications: it should seem that, on approximating, we can never quite get over the natural antipathy of author and bookseller, and that more particularly the ferine nature of the latter must break forth.

"You are out about the third canto: I have not done, nor designed, a line of continuation to that poem. I was too short a time at Rome for it, and have no thought of recommencing.

"I cannot well explain to you by letter what I conceive to be the origin of my sister's notion about 'Tales of my Landlord;' but it is some points of the characters of Sir E. Manley and Burley, as well as one or two of the jocular portions, on which it is founded, probably.

"If you have received Dr. Polidori as well as a parcel of books, and you can be of use to him, be so. I never was much more disgusted with any human production than with the eternal nonsense, and tracasseries, and emptiness, and ill humour, and vanity of that young person; but he has some talent, and is a man of honour, and has dispositions of amendment, in which he has been aided by a little subsequent experience, and may turn out well. Therefore, use your government interest for him, for he is improved and improvable.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 285. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, June 18. 1817.

"Enclosed is a letter to *Dr.* Holland from Pindemonte. Not knowing the Doctor's address, I am desired to inquire, and perhaps, being a literary man, you will know or discover his haunt near some populous churchyard. I have written to you a scolding letter—I believe, upon a misapprehended passage in your letter—but never mind: it will do for next time, and you will surely deserve it. Talking of doctors reminds me once more to recommend to you one who will not recommend himself,—the Doctor Polidori. If you can help him to a publisher, do; or, if you have any sick relation, I would advise his advice: all the patients he had in Italy are dead—Mr. Hope's son, Mr. Horner, and Lord Guilford, whom he embowelled with great success at Pisa.

"Remember me to Moore, whom I congratulate. How is Rogers? How does he look? eh! and what is become of Campbell and all t'other fellows of the Druid order? I got Maturin's Bedlam at last, but no other parcel; I am in fits for the tooth-powder, and the magnesia. I want some of Burkitt's *soda* powders. Will you tell Mr. Kinnaird that I

have written him two letters on pressing business (about Newstead, &c.), to which I humbly solicit his attendance. I am just returned from a gallop along the banks of the Brenta — time, sunset. Yours,

"B."

CHAPTER XXXI.

1817—1818.

VENICE. — COMMENCEMENT OF THE FOURTH CANTO OF CHILDE HAROLD. — LETTERS TO MURRAY AND MOORE. — LALLA ROOKH. — MY BOAT IS ON THE SHORE. — VISIT OF LEWIS AND HOBHOUSE. — DEATH OF MADAME DE STAEL. — THE MEDICAL TRAGEDY. — TREATMENT OF THE ENGLISH AT VENICE. — MR. JOY'S INTERVIEW WITH LORD BYRON. — LETTERS CONCERNING THE FOURTH CANTO OF CHILDE HAROLD. — AND POETRY IN GENERAL. — ARIOSTO OF THE NORTH. — COLERIDGE'S BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA. — MARLOW'S FAUSTUS. — ANECDOTES. — LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGUE. — DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE. — MY DEAR MR. MURRAY ETC. — COMPLETION OF BEPPO. — RIDES ON THE LIDO. — MR. HOPPNER'S REMINISCENCES OF LORD BYRON.

LETTER 286. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, July 1. 1817.

"SINCE my former letter, I have been working up my impressions into a *fourth* canto of Childe Harold, of which I have roughened off about rather better than thirty stanzas, and mean to go on; and probably to make this 'Fytte' the concluding one of the poem, so that you may propose against the autumn to draw out the conscription for 1818. You must provide moneys, as this new resumption bodes you certain disbursements. Somewhere about the end of September or October, I propose to be under way (*i. e.* in the press); but I have no idea yet of the probable length of calibre of the canto, or what it will be good for; but I mean to be as mercenary as possible, an example (I do not mean of any individual in particular, and least of all any person or persons of our mutual acquaintance) which I should have followed in my youth, and I might still have been a prosperous gentleman.

"No tooth-powder, no letters, no recent tidings of you.

"Mr. Lewis is at Venice, and I am going up to stay a week with him there — as it is one of his enthusiasms also to like the city.

"I stood in Venice on the 'Bridge of Sighs,' &c. &c.

"The 'Bridge of Sighs' (*i. e.* Ponte de'i Sospiri) is that which divides, or rather joins, the palace of the Doge to the prison of the state. It has two passages: the criminal went by the one to judgment, and returned by the other to death, being strangled in a chamber adjoining, where there was a mechanical process for the purpose.

"This is the first stanza of our new canto; and now for a line of the second: —

> "In Venice, Tasso's echoes are no more,
> And silent rows the songless gondolier,
> Her palaces, &c. &c.

"You know that formerly the gondoliers sung always, and Tasso's Gierusalemme was their ballad. Venice is built on seventy-two islands.

"There! there's a brick of your new Babel! and now, sirrah! what say you to the sample? "Yours, &c.

"P. S. — I shall write again by and by."

LETTER 287. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, July 8. 1817.

"If you can convey the enclosed letter to its address, or discover the person to whom it is directed, you will confer a favour upon the Venetian creditor of a deceased Englishman. This epistle is a dun to his executor, for house-rent. The name of the insolvent defunct is, or was, *Porter Valter*, according to the account of the plaintiff, which I rather suspect ought to be *Walter Porter*, according to our mode of collocation. If you are acquainted with any dead man of the like name a good deal in debt, pray dig him up, and tell him that 'a pound of his fair flesh' or the ducats are required, and that 'if you deny them, fie upon your law!'

"I hear nothing more from you about Moore's poems, Rogers's looks, or other literary phenomena; but to-morrow, being post-day, will bring perhaps some tidings. I write to you with people talking Venetian all about, so that you must not expect this letter to be all English.

"The other day, I had a squabble on the highway, as follows: — I was riding pretty quickly from Dolo home about eight in the evening, when I passed a party of people in a hired carriage, one of whom, poking his head out of the window, began bawling to me in an inarticulate but insolent manner. I wheeled my horse round, and overtaking, stopped the coach, and said, 'Signor, have you any commands for me?' He replied,

impudently as to manner, 'No.' I then asked him what he meant by that unseemly noise, to the discomfiture of the passers-by. He replied by some piece of impertinence, to which I answered by giving him a violent slap on the face. I then dismounted, (for this passed at the window, I being on horseback still,) and opening the door desired him to walk out, or I would give him another. But the first had settled him except as to words, of which he poured forth a profusion in blaphemies, swearing that he would go to the police and avouch a battery sans provocation. I said he lied, and was a * *, and if he did not hold his tongue, should be dragged out and beaten anew. He then held his tongue. I of course told him my name and residence, and defied him to the death, if he were a gentleman, or not a gentleman, and had the inclination to be genteel in the way of combat. He went to the police; but there having been bystanders in the road, — particularly a soldier, who had seen the business, — as well as my servant, notwithstanding the oaths of the coachman and five insides besides the plaintiff, and a good deal of paying on all sides, his complaint was dismissed, he having been the aggressor; — and I was subsequently informed that, had I not given him a blow, he might have been had into durance.

"So set down this,—'that in Aleppo once' I 'beat a Venetian;' but I assure you that he deserved it, for I am a quiet man, like Candide, though with somewhat of his fortune in being forced to forego my natural meekness every now and then.

"Yours, &c. "B."

LETTER 288. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, July 9. 1817.

"I have got the sketch and extracts from Lalla Rookh. The plan, as well as the extracts, I have seen, please me very much indeed, and I feel impatient for the whole.

"With regard to the critique on 'Manfred,' you have been in such a devil of a hurry, that you have only sent me the half: it breaks off at page 294. Send me the rest; and also page 270., where there is 'an account of the supposed origin of this dreadful story,' — in which, by the way, whatever it may be, the conjecturer is out, and knows nothing of the matter. I had a better origin than he can devise or divine, for the soul of him.

"You say nothing of Manfred's luck in the world; and I care not. He is one of the best of my misbegotten, say what they will.

"I got at last an extract, but *no parcels*. They will come, I suppose, some time or other. I am come up to Venice for a day or two to bathe, and am just going to take a swim in the Adriatic; so good evening — the post waits. Yours, &c.

"B.

"P. S. — Pray, was Manfred's speech to *the Sun* still retained in Act third? I hope so: it was one of the best in the thing, and better than the Colosseum. I have done *fifty-six* stanzas of canto fourth, Childe Harold; so down with your ducats."

LETTER 289. TO MR. MOORE.

"La Mira, Venice, July 10. 1817.

"Murray, the Mokanna of booksellers, has contrived to send me extracts from Lalla Rookh by the post. They are taken from some magazine, and contain a short outline and quotations from the two first Poems. I am very much delighted with what is before me, and very thirsty for the rest. You have caught the colours as if you had been in the rainbow, and the tone of the East is perfectly preserved. I am glad you have changed the title from 'Persian Tale.'

"I suspect you have written a devilish fine composition, and I rejoice in it from my heart; because 'the Douglas and the Percy both together are confident against a world in arms.' I hope you won't be affronted at my looking on us as 'birds of a feather;' though, on whatever subject you had written, I should have been very happy in your success.

"There is a simile of an orange-tree's 'flowers and fruits,' which I should have liked better if I did not believe it to be a reflection on * * *.[1]

"Do you remember Thurlow's poem to Sam — '*When* Rogers;' and that d—d supper at Rancliffe's that ought to have been a *dinner*?[2] 'Ah, Master Shallow, we have heard the chimes at midnight.' But,

"My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee!

"Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And whatever sky 's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

[1] ["Just then beneath some orange trees,
Whose fruit and blossoms in the breeze
Were wantoning together, free,
Like Age at play with Infancy." *Lalla Rookh.*]

[2] [See *antè*, p. 252.]

"Though the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on;
Though a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

"Were't the last drop in the well,
As I gasp'd upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

"With that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be — peace with thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore.

"This should have been written fifteen moons ago — the first stanza was. I am just come out from an hour's swim in the Adriatic; and I write to you with a black-eyed Venetian girl before me, reading Boccacio.

"Last week I had a row on the road (I came up to Venice from my casino, a few miles on the Paduan road, this blessed day, to bathe) with a fellow in a carriage, who was impudent to my horse. I gave him a swingeing box on the ear, which sent him to the police, who dismissed his complaint. Witnesses had seen the transaction. He first shouted, in an unseemly way, to frighten my palfry. I wheeled round, rode up to the window, and asked him what he meant. He grinned, and said some foolery, which produced him an immediate slap in the face, to his utter discomfiture. Much blasphemy ensued, and some menace, which I stopped by dismounting and opening the carriage door, and intimating an intention of mending the road with his immediate remains, if he did not hold his tongue. He held it.

"Monk Lewis is here — 'how pleasant!'[1] He is a very good fellow, and very much yours. So is Sam — so is every body — and amongst the number,

"Yours ever, "B.

"P. S. — What think you of Manfred?"

LETTER 290. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, July 15. 1817.

"I have finished (that is, written — the file comes afterwards) ninety and eight stanzas of the fourth canto, which I mean to be the concluding one. It will probably be about the same length as the *third*, being already of the dimensions of the first or second cantos. I look upon parts of it as very good, that is, if the three former are good, but this we shall see; and at any rate, good or not, it is rather a different style from the last — less metaphysical — which, at any rate, will be a variety. I sent you the shaft of the column as a specimen the other day, *i. e.* the first stanza. So you may be thinking of its arrival towards autumn, whose winds will not be the only ones to be raised, if *so be as how that* it is ready by that time.

"I lent Lewis, who is at Venice, (in or on the Canalaccio, the Grand Canal,) your extracts from Lalla Rookh and Manuel[2], and, out of contradiction, it may be, he likes the last, and is not much taken with the first, of these performances. Of Manuel, I think, with the exception of a few capers, it is as heavy a nightmare as was ever bestrode by indigestion.

"Of the extracts I can but judge as extracts, and I prefer the 'Peri' to the 'Silver Veil.' He seems not so much at home in his versification of the 'Silver Veil,' and a little embarrassed with his horrors; but the conception of the character of the impostor is fine, and the plan of great scope for his genius, — and I doubt not that, as a whole, it will be very Arabesque and beautiful.

"Your late epistle is not the most abundant in information, and has not yet been succeeded by any other; so that I know nothing of your own concerns, or of any concerns, and as I never hear from any body but yourself who does not tell me something as disagreeable as possible, I should not be sorry to hear from you: and as it is not very probable, — if I can, by any device or possible arrangement with regard to my personal affairs, so arrange it, — that I shall return soon, or reside ever in England, all that you tell me will be all I shall know or enquire after, as to our beloved realm of Grub Street, and the black brethren and blue sisterhood of that extensive suburb of Babylon. Have you had no new babe of literature sprung up to replace the dead, the distant, the tired, and the *re*tired? no prose, no verse, no *nothing?*"

LETTER 291. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, July 20. 1817.

"I write to give you notice that I have completed the *fourth* and *ultimate* canto of Childe Harold. It consists of 126 stanzas, and is consequently the longest of the four.

It is yet to be copied and polished; and the notes are to come, of which it will require more than the *third* canto, as it

[1] An allusion (such as often occurs in these letters) to an anecdote with which he had been amused.

[2] A tragedy, entitled "Manuel," by the Rev. Mr. Maturin. [See *ante*, p. 358.]

necessarily treats more of works of art than of nature. It shall be sent towards autumn; — and now for our barter. What do you bid? eh? you shall have samples, an' it so please you: but I wish to know what I am to expect (as the saying is) in these hard times, when poetry does not let for half its value. If you are disposed to do what Mrs. Winifred Jenkins calls 'the handsome thing,' I may perhaps throw you some odd matters to the lot, — translations, or slight originals; there is no saying what may be on the anvil between this and the booking season. Recollect that it is the *last* canto, and completes the work; whether as good as the others, I cannot judge, in course — least of all as yet, — but it shall be as little worse as I can help. I may, perhaps, give some little gossip in the notes as to the present state of Italian literati and literature, being acquainted with some of their *capi* — men as well as books; — but this depends upon my humour at the time. So, now, pronounce: I say nothing.

"When you have got the whole *four* cantos, I think you might venture on an edition of the whole poem in quarto, with spare copies of the two last for the purchasers of the old edition of the first two. There is a hint for you, worthy of the Row; and now, perpend — pronounce.

"I have not received a word from you of the fate of 'Manfred' or 'Tasso,' which seems to me odd, whether they have failed or succeeded.

"As this is a scrawl of business, and I have lately written at length and often on other subjects, I will only add that I am, &c."

LETTER 292. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, August 7. 1817.

"Your letter of the 18th, and, what will please you, as it did me, the parcel sent by the good-natured aid and abetment of Mr. Croker, are arrived. — Messrs. Lewis and Hobhouse are here: the former in the same house, the latter a few hundred yards distant.

"You say nothing of Manfred, from which its failure may be inferred; but I think it odd you should not say so at once. I know nothing, and hear absolutely nothing, of any body or any thing in England; and there are no English papers, so that all you say will be news — of any person, or thing, or things. I am at present very anxious about Newstead, and sorry that Kinnaird is leaving England at this minute, though I do not tell him so, and would rather he should have *his* pleasure, although it may not in this instance tend to my profit.

"If I understand rightly, you have paid into Morland's 1500 *pounds*: as the agreement in the paper is two thousand *guineas*, there will remain therefore *six* hundred *pounds*, and not five hundred, the odd hundred being the extra to make up the specie. Six hundred and thirty pounds will bring it to the like for Manfred and Tasso, making a total of twelve hundred and thirty, I believe, for I am not a good calculator. I do not wish to press you, but I tell you fairly that it will be a convenience to me to have it paid as soon as it can be made convenient to yourself.

"The new and last canto is 130 stanzas in length; and may be made more or less. I have fixed no price, even in idea, and have no notion of what it may be good for. There are no metaphysics in it; at least, I think not. Mr. Hobhouse has promised me a copy of Tasso's Will, for notes; and I have some curious things to say about Ferrara, and Parisina's story, and perhaps a farthing candle's worth of light upon the present state of Italian literature. I shall hardly be ready by October; but that don't matter. I have all to copy and correct, and the notes to write.

"I do not know whether Scott will like it; but I have called him the '*Ariosto* of the North,' in my *text*.[1] *If he should not, say so in time.*

"An Italian translation of 'Glenarvon,' came lately to be printed at Venice. The censor (Sr. Petrotini) refused to sanction the publication till he had seen me on the subject. I told him that I did not recognise the slightest relation between that book and myself; but that, whatever opinions might be upon that subject, *I* would never prevent or oppose the publication of *any* book, in *any* language, on my own private account; and desired him (against his inclination) to permit the poor translator to publish his labours. It is going forwards in consequence. You may say this, with my compliments, to the author.

"Yours."

LETTER 293. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, August 12. 1817.

"I have been very sorry to hear of the death of Madame de Stael, not only because

[1] ["The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth." *Childe Harold*, c. iv. st. 40.]

she had been very kind to me at Copet, but because now I can never requite her. In a general point of view, she will leave a great gap in society and literature.

"With regard to death, I doubt that we have any right to pity the dead for their own sakes.

"The copies of Manfred and Tasso are arrived, thanks to Mr. Croker's cover. You have destroyed the whole effect and moral of the poem by omitting the last line of Manfred's speaking[1]; and why this was done, I know not. Why you persist in saying nothing of the thing itself, I am equally at a loss to conjecture. If it is for fear of telling me something disagreeable, you are wrong; because sooner or later I must know it, and I am not so new, nor so raw, nor so inexperienced, as not to be able to bear, not the mere paltry, petty disappointments of authorship, but things more serious, — at least I hope so, and that what you may think irritability is merely mechanical, and only acts like galvanism on a dead body, or the muscular motion which survives sensation.

"If it is that you are out of humour, because I wrote to you a sharp letter, recollect that it was partly from a misconception of your letter, and partly because you did a thing you had no right to do without consulting me.

"I have, however, heard good of Manfred from two other quarters, and from men who would not be scrupulous in saying what they thought, or what was said; and so 'good morrow to you, good Master Lieutenant.'

"I wrote to you twice about the fourth canto, which you will answer at your pleasure. Mr. Hobhouse and I have come up for a day to the city; Mr. Lewis is gone to England; and I am

"Yours."

LETTER 294. TO MR. MURRAY.

"La Mira, near Venice, August 21. 1817.

"I take you at your word about Mr. Hanson, and will feel obliged if you will *go* to him, and request Mr. Davies also to visit him by my desire, and repeat that I trust that neither Mr. Kinnaird's absence nor mine will prevent his taking all proper steps to accelerate and promote the sales of Newstead and Rochdale, upon which the whole of my future personal comfort depends. It is impossible for me to express how much any delays upon these points would inconvenience me; and I do not know a greater obligation that can be conferred upon me than the pressing these things upon Hanson, and making him act according to my wishes. I wish you would *speak out*, at least to *me*, and tell me what you allude to by your cold way of mentioning him. All mysteries at such a distance are not merely tormenting but mischievous, and may be prejudicial to my interests; so, pray expound, that I may consult with Mr. Kinnaird when he arrives; and remember that I prefer the most disagreeable certainties to hints and innuendos. The devil take every body: I never can get any person to be explicit about any thing or any body, and my whole life is passed in conjecture of what people mean: you all talk in the style of Caroline Lamb's novels.

"It is not Mr. St. John, but *Mr. St. Aubyn*, son of Sir John St. Aubyn. *Polidori* knows him, and introduced him to me. He is of Oxford, and has got my parcel. The Doctor will ferret him out, or ought. The parcel contains many letters, some of Madame de Stael's, and other people's, besides MSS., &c. By ——, if I find the gentleman, and he don't find the parcel, I will say something he won't like to hear.

"You want a 'civil and delicate declension' for the medical tragedy? Take it —

> "Dear Doctor, I have read your play,
> Which is a good one in its way, —
> Purges the eyes and moves the bowels,
> And drenches handkerchiefs like towels, &c. &c.[2]

"P. S. — I've done the fourth and last Canto, which amounts to 133 stanzas. I desire you to name a price; if you don't, *I* will; so I advise you in time.

"Yours, &c.

"There will be a good many notes."

Among those minor misrepresentations of which it was Lord Byron's fate to be the victim, advantage was, at this time, taken of his professed distaste to the English, to accuse him of acts of inhospitality, and even rudeness, towards some of his fellow-countrymen. How far different was his treatment of all who ever visited him, many grateful testimonies might be collected to prove; but I shall here content myself with selecting a few extracts from an account given me by Mr. Henry Joy of a visit which, in company with another English gentleman, he paid to the noble poet this summer, at his villa on the banks of the Brenta. After mentioning the various civilities they had experienced from Lord Byron; and, among

[1] ["Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die."]

[2] [See *Works*, p. 569.]

others, his having requested them to name their own day for dining with him, — "We availed ourselves," says Mr. Joy, "of this considerate courtesy by naming the day fixed for our return to Padua, when our route would lead us to his door; and we were welcomed with all the cordiality which was to be expected from so friendly a bidding. Such traits of kindness in such a man deserve to be recorded on account of the numerous slanders thrown upon him by some of the tribes of tourists, who resented, as a personal affront, his resolution to avoid their impertinent inroads upon his retirement. So far from any appearance of indiscriminate aversion to his countrymen, his inquiries about his friends in England (*quorum pars magna fuisti*) were most anxious and particular.

"He expressed some opinions," continues my informant, "on matters of taste, which cannot fail to interest his biographer. He contended that Sculpture, as an art, was vastly superior to Painting; — a preference which is strikingly illustrated by the fact that, in the fourth canto of Childe Harold, he gives the most elaborate and splendid account of several statues, and none of any pictures; although Italy is, emphatically, the land of painting, and her best statues are derived from Greece. By the way, he told us that there were more objects of interest in Rome alone than in all Greece from one extremity to the other. After regaling us with an excellent dinner, (in which, by the by, a very English joint of roast beef showed that he did not extend his antipathies to all John-Bullisms,) he took me in his carriage some miles of our route towards Padua, after apologising to my fellow-traveller for the separation, on the score of his anxiety to hear all he could of his friends in England; and I quitted him with a confirmed impression of the strong ardour and sincerity of his attachment to those by whom he did not fancy himself slighted or ill treated."

LETTER 295. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Sept. 4. 1817.

"Your letter of the 15th has conveyed with its contents the impression of a seal, to which the 'Saracen's Head' is a seraph, and the 'Bull and Mouth' a delicate device. I knew that calumny had sufficiently *blackened* me of later days, but not that it had given the features as well as complexion of a negro. Poor Augusta is not less, but rather more, shocked than myself, and says, 'people seem to have lost their recollection strangely' when they engraved such a 'blackamoor.' Pray don't seal (at least to me) with such a caricature of the human numskull altogether; and if you don't break the seal-cutter's head, at least crack his libel (or likeness, if it should be a likeness) of mine.

"Mr. Kinnaird is not yet arrived, but expected. He has lost by the way all the tooth-powder, as a letter from Spa informs me.

"By Mr. Rose I received safely, though tardily, magnesia and tooth-powder, and 'Alashtar!'[1] Why do you send me such trash — worse than trash, the Sublime of Mediocrity? Thanks for Lalla, however, which is good; and thanks for the Edinburgh and Quarterly, both very amusing and well written. Paris in 1815, &c.[2] — good. Modern Greece — good for nothing; written by some one who has never been there, and not being able to manage the Spenser stanza, has invented a thing of his own, consisting of two elegiac stanzas, an heroic line, and an Alexandrine, twisted on a string. Besides, why '*modern?*' You may say *modern Greeks*, but surely *Greece* itself is rather more ancient than ever it was. Now for business.

"You offer 1500 guineas for the new Canto: I won't take it. I ask two thousand five hundred guineas for it, which you will either give or not, as you think proper. It concludes the poem, and consists of 144 stanzas. The notes are numerous, and chiefly written by Mr. Hobhouse, whose researches have been indefatigable; and who, I will venture to say, has more real knowledge of Rome and its environs than any Englishman who has been there since Gibbon. By the way, to prevent any mistakes, I think it necessary to state the fact that *he*, Mr. Hobhouse, has no interest whatever in the price or profit to be derived from the copyright of either poem or notes, directly or indirectly; so that you are not to suppose that it is by, for, or through him, that I require more for this canto than the preceding. — No: but if Mr. Eustace[3] was to have had two thousand for a poem on Education; if Mr. Moore is to have three thousand for Lalla, &c.; if Mr. Campbell is to have three thousand for his prose or poetry[4]

[1] [By Henry Gally Knight, Esq. M.P.]

[2] [By the Rev. George Croly, D.D.]

[3] [The Rev. John Chetwode Eustace, author of "The Classical Tour in Italy." At the time of his death, which took place at Naples in 1815, he had made considerable progress in a didactic poem on the Culture of the Youthful Mind.]

[4] [Mr. Thomas Campbell's "Specimens of the British Poets, with Biographical and Critical Notices," appeared in 1819, in seven volumes 8vo.]

— I don't mean to disparage these gentlemen or their labours — but I ask the aforesaid price for mine. You will tell me that their productions are considerably *longer:* very true, and when they shorten them, I will lengthen mine, and ask less. You shall submit the MS. to Mr. Gifford, and any other two gentlemen to be named by you, (Mr. Frere, or Mr. Croker, or whomever you please, except such fellows as your * * s [Gally Knights] and * * s [Sothebys;] and if they pronounce this canto to be inferior as a *whole* to the preceding, I will not appeal from their award, but burn the manuscript, and leave things as they are.

"Yours very truly.

"P. S. — In answer to a former letter, I sent you a short statement of what I thought the state of our present copyright account, viz. six hundred *pounds* still (or lately) due on Childe Harold, and six hundred *guineas*, on Manfred and Tasso, making a total of twelve hundred and thirty pounds. If we agree about the new poem, I shall take the liberty to reserve the choice of the manner in which it should be published, viz. a quarto, certes. If we do not agree, recollect that you have had the refusal."

LETTER 296. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"La Mira, Sept. 12. 1817.

"I set out yesterday morning with the intention of paying my respects, and availing myself of your permission to walk over the premises.[1] On arriving at Padua, I found that the march of the Austrian troops had engrossed so many horses[2], that those I could procure were hardly able to crawl; and their weakness, together with the prospect of finding none at all at the post-house of Monselice, and consequently either not arriving that day at Este, or so late as to be unable to return home here the same evening, induced me to turn aside in a second visit to Arqua, instead of proceeding onwards; and even thus I hardly got back in time.

"Next week I shall be obliged to be in Venice to meet Lord Kinnaird and his brother, who are expected in a few days. And this interruption, together with that occasioned by the continued march of the Austrians for the next few days, will not allow me to fix any precise period for availing myself of your kindness, though I should wish to take the earliest opportunity. Perhaps, if absent, you will have the goodness to permit one of your servants to show me the grounds and house, or as much of either as may be convenient; at any rate, I shall take the first occasion possible to go over, and regret very much that I was yesterday prevented.

"I have the honour to be your obliged, &c."

LETTER 297. TO MR. MURRAY.

"September 15. 1817.

"I enclose a sheet for correction, if ever you get to another edition. You will observe that the blunder in printing makes it appear as if the Château was *over* St. Gingo, instead of being on the opposite shore of the Lake, over Clarens. So, separate the paragraphs, otherwise my *to*pography will seem as inaccurate as your *ty*pography on this occasion.

"The other day I wrote to convey my proposition with regard to the fourth and concluding canto. I have gone over and extended it to one hundred and fifty stanzas, which is almost as long as the two first were originally, and longer by itself than any of the smaller poems except 'The Corsair.' Mr. Hobhouse has made some very valuable and accurate notes of considerable length, and you may be sure that I will do for the text all that I can to finish with decency. I look upon Childe Harold as my best; and as I begun, I think of concluding with it. But I make no resolutions on that head, as I broke my former intention with regard to 'The Corsair.' However, I fear that I shall never do better; and yet, not being thirty years of age, for some moons to come, one ought to be progressive as far as intellect goes for many a good year. But I have had a devilish deal of wear and tear of mind and body in my time, besides having published too often and much already. God grant me some judgment to do what may be most fitting in that and every thing else, for I doubt my own exceedingly.

[1] A country-house on the Euganean hills, near Este, which Mr. Hoppner, who was then the English Consul-General at Venice, had for some time occupied, and which Lord Byron afterwards rented of him, but never resided in it.

[2] So great was the demand for horses, on the line of march of the Austrians, that all those belonging to private individuals were put in requisition for their use, and Lord Byron himself received an order to send his for the same purpose. This, however, he positively refused to do, adding, that if an attempt were made to take them by force, he would shoot them through the head in the middle of the road, rather than submit to such an act of tyranny upon a foreigner who was merely a temporary resident in the country. Whether his answer was ever reported to the higher authorities I know not; but his horses were suffered to remain unmolested in his stables.

"I have read 'Lalla Rookh,' but not with sufficient attention yet, for I ride about, and lounge, and ponder, and — two or three other things; so that my reading is very desultory, and not so attentive as it used to be. I am very glad to hear of its popularity, for Moore is a very noble fellow in all respects, and will enjoy it without any of the bad feelings which success — good or evil — sometimes engenders in the men of rhyme. Of the poem itself, I will tell you my opinion when I have mastered it: I say of the *poem*, for I don't like the *prose* at all — at all; in the mean time, the 'Fire worshippers' is the best, and the 'Veiled Prophet' the worst, of the volume.

"With regard to poetry in general [1], I am convinced, the more I think of it, that he and *all* of us — Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, Moore, Campbell, I, — are all in the wrong, one as much as another; that we are upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system, or systems, not worth a damn in itself, and from which none but Rogers and Crabbe are free; and that the present and next generations will finally be of this opinion. I am the more confirmed in this by having lately gone over some of our classics, particularly *Pope*, whom I tried in this way, — I took Moore's poems and my own and some others, and went over them side by side with Pope's, and I was really astonished (I ought not to have been so) and mortified at the ineffable distance in point of sense, harmony, effect, and even *imagination*, passion, and *invention*, between the little Queen Anne's man, and us of the Lower Empire. Depend upon it, it is all Horace then, and Claudian now, among us; and if I had to begin again, I would mould myself accordingly. Crabbe's the man, but he has got a coarse and impracticable subject, and * * * [Rogers] is retired upon half-pay, and has done enough, unless he were to do as he did formerly."

LETTER 298. TO MR. MURRAY.

"September 17. 1817.

"Mr. Hobhouse purposes being in England in November; he will bring the fourth Canto with him, notes and all; the text contains one hundred and fifty stanzas, which is long for that measure.

"With regard to the 'Ariosto of the North,' surely their themes, chivalry, war, and love, were as like as can be; and as to the compliment, if you knew what the Italians think of Ariosto, you would not hesitate about that. But as to their 'measures,' you forget that Ariosto's is an octave stanza, and Scott's anything but a stanza. If you think Scott will dislike it, say so, and I will expunge. I do not call him the '*Scotch* Ariosto,' which would be sad *provincial* eulogy, but the 'Ariosto of the *North*,' meaning of all *countries* that are *not* the *South*.

"As I have recently troubled you rather frequently, I will conclude, repeating that I am

"Yours ever, &c."

LETTER 299. TO MR. MURRAY.

"October 12. 1817.

"Mr. Kinnaird and his brother, Lord Kinnaird, have been here, and are now gone again. All your missives came, except the tooth-powder, of which I request further supplies, at all convenient opportunities; as also of magnesia and soda-powders, both great luxuries here, and neither to be had good, or indeed hardly at all, of the natives.

* * *

"In Coleridge's Life, I perceive an attack upon the then Committee of Drury-Lane Theatre for acting Bertram, and an attack upon Maturin's Bertram for being acted.[2] Considering all things, this is not very grateful nor graceful on the part of the worthy autobiographer; and I would answer, if I

[1] On this paragraph, in the MS. copy of the above letter, I find the following note, in the handwriting of Mr. Gifford: — "There is more good sense, and feeling and judgment in this passage, than in any other I ever read, or Lord Byron wrote."

[2] ["Drury Lane was to be restored to its former classical renown; Shakspeare, Jonson, and Otway, with the expurgated muses of Vanburgh, Congreve, and Wycherly, were to be reinaugurated in their rightful dominion over British audiences; and the Herculean process was to commence, by exterminating the speaking monsters imported from the banks of the Danube, compared with which their mute relations, the emigrants from Exeter 'Change and Polito (late Pidcock's) show-carts, were tame and inoffensive. Could an heroic project, at once so refined and so arduous, be consistently entrusted to, could its success be rationally expected from, a mercenary manager at whose critical quarantine the *lucri bonus ordor* would conciliate a bill of health to the plague in person? No! As the work proposed, such must be the workmaster's rank, fortune, liberal education, and critical discernment, delicate tact, disinterestedness, unsuspected morals, notorious patriotism, and tried Macænaship, — these were the recommendations that influenced the proprietary subscribers of Drury Lane Theatre, these the motives that occasioned the election of its supreme Committee of Management. This circumstance alone would have excited a strong interest in the public mind, respecting the *first* production of the Tragic Muse which had been announced under such auspices, and had passed the ordeal of such judgments, and — the tragedy of *Bertram* was the work on which the great expectations, justified by so many causes, were doomed to settle!"— *Coleridge's Biog. Literaria*, vol. ii. p. 255.]

had *not* obliged him. Putting my own pains to forward the views of Coleridge out of the question, I know there was every disposition, on the part of the Sub-Committee, to bring forward any production of his, were it feasible. The play he offered, though poetical, did not appear at all practicable, and Bertram did ; — and hence this long tirade, which is the last chapter of his vagabond life.

"As for Bertram, Maturin may defend his own-begotten, if he likes it well enough ; I leave the Irish clergyman and the new Orator Henley to battle it out between them, satisfied to have done the best I could for *both*. I may say this to *you*, who know it.

"Mr. Coleridge may console himself with the 'fervour, — the almost religious fervour' of his and Wordsworth's disciples, as he calls it. If he means that as any proof of their merits, I will find him as much 'fervour' in behalf of Richard Brothers and Joanna Southcote as ever gathered over his pages or round his fireside.

"My answer to your proposition about the fourth canto you will have received, and I await yours ; — perhaps we may not agree. I have since written a poem (of 84 octave stanzas), humorous, in or after the excellent manner of Mr. Whistlecraft (whom I take to be Frere), on a Venetian anecdote which amused me : — but till I have your answer, I can say nothing more about it.

"Mr. Hobhouse does not return to England in November, as he intended, but will winter here ; and as he is to convey the poem, or poems, — for there may perhaps be more than the two mentioned, (which, by the way, I shall not perhaps include in the same publication or agreement,) I shall not be able to publish so soon as expected ; but I suppose there is no harm in the delay.

"I have *signed* and sent your former *copyrights* by Mr. Kinnaird, but *not* the *receipt*, because the money is not yet paid. Mr. Kinnaird has a power of attorney to sign for me, and will, when necessary.

"Many thanks for the Edinburgh Review, which is very kind about Manfred, and defends its originality [1], which I did not know that any body had attacked. I *never read*, and do not know that I ever saw, the 'Faustus of Marlow,' and had, and have, no dramatic works by me in English, except the recent things you sent me ; but I heard Mr. Lewis translate verbally some scenes of *Goethe's Faust* (which were some good, and some bad) last summer ; — which is all I know of the history of that magical personage ; and as to the germs of Manfred, they may be found in the Journal which I sent to Mrs. Leigh (part of which you saw) when I went over first the Dent de Jaman, and then the Wengen or Wengeberg Alp and Sheideck and made the giro of the Jungfrau, Shreckhorn, &c. &c., shortly before I left Switzerland. I have the whole scene of Manfred before me, as if it was but yesterday, and could point it out, spot by spot, torrent and all.

"Of the Promethus of Æschylus [2] I was passionately fond as a boy (it was one of the Greek plays we read thrice a year at Harrow) ; — indeed that and the 'Medea' were the only ones, except the 'Seven before Thebes,' which ever much pleased me. As to the 'Faustus of Marlow,' I never read, never saw nor heard of it — at least, thought of it, except that I think Mr. Gifford mentioned, in a note of his which you sent me, something about the catastrophe ; but not as having any thing to do with mine, which may or may not resemble it, for any thing I know.

"The Prometheus, if not exactly in my plan, has always been so much in my head, that I can easily conceive its influence over all or any thing that I have written ; — but I deny Marlow and his progeny, and beg that you will do the same.

"If you can send me the paper in question, which the Edinburgh Review mentions, *do*. The review in the magazine you say was written by Wilson ? it had all the air of being a poet's, and was a very good one. The

[1] A paper in the Edinburgh Magazine, in which it was suggested that the general conception of Manfred, and much of what is excellent in the manner of its execution, had been borrowed from "The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus, of Marlow." [See *Blackwood*, vol. i. p. 388. — "It is suggested, in a late number of the Edinburgh Magazine, that the general conception of Manfred, and much of what is excellent in the manner of its execution, have been borrowed from 'the tragical History of Dr. Faustus, of Marlow ;' and a variety of passages are quoted, which the author considers as similar, and, in many respects, superior to others in the poem before us. We cannot agree in the general terms of this conclusion. These, and many other fanciful verses in this curious old drama, prove nothing, we think, against the originality of Manfred ; for there is nothing to be found there of the pride, the abstraction, and the heart-rooted misery in which that originality consists. Faustus is a vulgar sorcerer, tempted to sell his soul to the Devil for the ordinary price of sensual pleasure and earthly power and glory ; and who shrinks and shudders in agony when the forfeit comes to be exacted. The style, too, of Marlow, is weak and childish compared with the depth and force of much of what we have quoted from Lord Byron." — *Edinb. Rev.* vol. xxviii. p. 431.]

[2] ["In the tone and pitch of the composition, as well as in the character of the diction in the more solemn parts, Manfred reminds us more of the Prometheus of Æschylus, than of any more modern performance." — *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 431.]

Edinburgh Review I take to be Jeffrey's own by its friendliness. I wonder they thought it worth while to do so, so soon after the former; but it was evidently with a good motive.

"I saw Hoppner the other day, whose country-house at Este I have taken for two years. If you come out next summer, let me know in time. Love to Gifford.

"Yours ever truly.

> "Crabbe, Malcolm, Hamilton, and Chantrey,
> Are all partakers of my pantry.

These two lines are omitted in your letter to the Doctor, after —

> "All clever men who make their way."

LETTER 300. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, October 23. 1817.

"Your two letters are before me, and our bargain is so far concluded. How sorry I am to hear that Gifford is unwell! Pray tell me he is better: I hope it is nothing but *cold*. As you say his illness originates in cold, I trust it will get no further.

"Mr. Whistlecraft has no greater admirer than myself. I have written a story in 89 stanzas, in imitation of him, called *Beppo*, (the short name for Giuseppe, that is, the *Joe* of the Italian Joseph,) which I shall throw you into the balance of the fourth Canto to help you round to your money; but you perhaps had better publish it anonymously; but this we will see to by and by.

"In the notes to Canto fourth, Mr. Hobhouse has pointed out *several errors* of *Gibbon*. You may depend upon H.'s research and accuracy. You may print it in what shape you please.

"With regard to a future large edition, you may print all, or any thing, except 'English Bards,' to the republication of which at *no* time will I consent. I would not reprint them on any consideration. I don't think them good for much, even in point of poetry; and, as to other things, you are to recollect that I gave up the publication on account of the *Hollands*, and I do not think that any time or circumstances can neutralise the suppression. Add to which, that, after being on terms with almost all the bards and critics of the day, it would be savage at any time, but worst of all *now*, to revive this foolish lampoon.

"The review of Manfred came very safely, and I am much pleased with it. It is odd that they should say (that is, somebody in a magazine whom the Edinburgh controverts) that it was taken from Marlow's Faust, which I never read nor saw. An American, who came the other day from Germany, told Mr. Hobhouse that Manfred was taken from Goethe's Faust. The devil may take both the Faustuses, German and English, — I have taken neither.

"Will you send to Hanson, and say that he has not written since 9th September? — at least I have had no letter since, to my great surprise.

"Will you desire Messrs. Morland to send out whatever additional sums have or may be paid in credit immediately and always to their Venice correspondents? It is two months ago that they sent me out an additional credit for *one thousand pounds*. I was very glad of it, but I don't know how the devil it came; for I can only make out 500 of Hanson's payment, and I had thought the other 500 came from you; but it did not, it seems, as, by yours of the 7th instant, you have only just paid the 1230*l.* balance.

"Mr. Kinnaird is on his way home with the assignments. I can fix no time for the arrival of Canto fourth, which depends on the journey of Mr. Hobhouse home; and I do not think that this will be immediate.

"Yours in great haste and very truly,

"B.

"P. S. — Morlands have not yet written to my bankers apprising the payment of your balances: pray desire them to do so.

"Ask them about the *previous* thousand — of which I know 500 came from Hanson's — and make out the other 500 — that is, whence it came."

LETTER 301. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, November 15. 1817.

"Mr. Kinnaird has probably returned to England by this time, and will have conveyed to you any tidings you may wish to have of us and ours. I have come back to Venice for the winter. Mr. Hobhouse will probably set off in December, but what day or week I know not. He is my opposite neighbour at present.

"I wrote yesterday in some perplexity, and no very good humour, to Mr. Kinnaird, to inform me about Newstead and the Hansons, of which and whom I hear nothing since his departure from this place, except in a few unintelligible words from an unintelligible woman.

"I am as sorry to hear of Dr. Polidori's accident as one can be for a person for whom one has a dislike, and something of contempt. When he gets well tell me, and how he gets on in the sick line. Poor fellow! how came he to fix there?

" I fear the Doctor's skill at Norwich
Will hardly salt the Doctor's porridge.

Methought he was going to the Brazils to give the Portuguese physic (of which they are fond to desperation) with the Danish consul.

" Your new Canto has expanded to one hundred and sixty-seven stanzas. It will be long, you see ; and as for the notes by Hobhouse, I suspect they will be of the heroic size. You must keep Mr. Hobhouse in good humour, for he is devilish touchy yet about your Review and all which it inherits, including the editor, the Admiralty, and its bookseller. I used to think that *I* was a good deal of an author in *amour propre* and *noli me tangere ;* but these prose fellows are worst, after all, about their little comforts.

" Do you remember my mentioning, some months ago, the Marquis Moncada — a Spaniard of distinction and fourscore years, my summer neighbour at La Mira? Well, about six weeks ago, he fell in love with a Venetian girl of family, and no fortune or character ; took her into his mansion ; quarrelled with all his former friends for giving him advice (except me who gave him none), and installed her present concubine and future wife and mistress of himself and furniture. At the end of a month, in which she demeaned herself as ill as possible, he found out a correspondence between her and some former keeper, and after nearly strangling, turned her out of the house, to the great scandal of the keeping part of the town, and with a prodigious éclat, which has occupied all the canals and coffee-houses in Venice. He said she wanted to poison him ; and she says — God knows what ; but between them they have made a great deal of noise. I know a little of both the parties : Moncado seemed a very sensible old man, a character which he has not quite kept up on this occasion ; and the woman is rather showy than pretty. For the honour of religion, she was bred in a convent ; and for the credit of Great Britain, taught by an Englishwoman.

" Yours, &c."

LETTER 302. TO MR. MURRAY.

" Venice, December 3. 1817.

" A Venetian lady, learned and somewhat stricken in years, having, in her intervals of love and devotion, taken upon her to translate the Letters and write the Life of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, — to which undertaking there are two obstacles, firstly, ignorance of English, and, secondly, a total dearth of information on the subject of her projected biography, — has applied to me for facts or falsities upon this promising project. Lady Montague lived the last twenty or more years of her life in or near Venice, I believe ; but here they know nothing, and remember nothing, for the story of to-day is succeeded by the scandal of to-morrow ; and the wit, and beauty, and gallantry, which might render your countrywoman notorious in her own country, must have been *here* no great distinction — because the first is in no request, and the two latter are common to all women, or at least the last of them. If you can therefore tell me any thing, or get any thing told, of Lady Wortley Montague, I shall take it as a favour, and will transfer and translate it to the 'Dama' in question. And I pray you besides to send me, by some quick and safe voyager, the edition of her Letters, and the stupid Life, by Dr. Dalaway, published by her proud and foolish family.

" The death of the Princess Charlotte has been a shock even here, and must have been an earthquake at home. The Courier's list of some three hundred heirs to the crown (including the house of Wirtemberg, with that blackguard, Paul, of disreputable memory, whom I remember seeing at various balls during the visit of the Muscovites, &c. in 1814) must be very consolatory to all true lieges, as well as foreigners, except Signor Travis, a rich Jew merchant of this city, who complains grievously of the length of British mourning, which has countermanded all the silks which he was on the point of transmitting, for a year to come. The death of this poor girl is melancholy in every respect, dying at twenty or so, in childbed — of a *boy* too, a present princess and future queen, and just as she began to be happy, and to enjoy herself, and the hopes which she inspired. [1]

" I think, as far as I can recollect, she is the first royal defunct in childbed upon record in *our* history. I feel sorry in every respect — for the loss of a female reign, and a woman hitherto harmless ; and all the lost rejoicings, and addresses, and drunkenness, and disbursements, of John Bull on the occasion.

[1] [" Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou ?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead ?
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head ?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever : with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy." *Childe Harold*, c. iv. st. 168.]

"The Prince will marry again, after divorcing his wife, and Mr. Southey will write an elegy now, and an ode then; the Quarterly will have an article against the press, and the Edinburgh an article, *half* and *half*, about reform and right of divorce; the British will give you Dr. Chalmers's funeral sermon much commended, with a place in the stars for deceased royalty; and the Morning Post will have already yelled forth its 'syllables of dolour.'

"Woe, woe, Nealliny!—the young Nealliny!

"It is some time since I have heard from you: are you in bad humour? I suppose so. I have been so myself, and it is your turn now, and by and by mine will come round again. "Yours truly,

"B.

"P. S.—Countess Albrizzi, come back from Paris, has brought me a medal of himself, a present from Denon to me, and a likeness, to the death, of Mr. Rogers (belonging to her), by Denon also. I never saw so good a portrait."

LETTER 303. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Venice, December 15. 1817.

"I should have thanked you before, for your favour a few days ago, had I not been in the intention of paying my respects, personally, this evening, from which I am deterred by the recollection that you will probably be at the Count Goess's this evening, which has made me postpone my intrusion.

"I think your Elegy a remarkably good one, not only as a composition, but both the politics and poetry contain a far greater portion of truth and generosity than belongs to the times, or to the professors of these opposite pursuits, which usually agree only in one point, as extremes meet. I do not know whether you wished me to retain the copy, but I shall retain it till you tell me otherwise; and am very much obliged by the perusal.

"My own sentiments on Venice, &c., such as they are, I had already thrown into verse last summer, in the fourth canto of Childe Harold, now in preparation for the press; and I think much more highly of them, for being in coincidence with yours.

"Believe me yours, &c."

LETTER 304. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, January 8. 1818.

"My dear Mr. Murray,
You're in a damn'd hurry
To set up this ultimate Canto;
But (if they don't rob us)
You'll see Mr. Hobhouse
Will bring it safe in his portmanteau.

"For the Journal you hint of,
As ready to print off,
No doubt you do right to commend it;
But as yet I have writ off,
The devil a bit of
Our 'Beppo;'—when copied, I'll send it.

"Then you've Sotheby's Tour,—
No great things, to be sure,
You could hardly begin with a less work;
For the pompous rascallion,
Who don't speak Italian
Nor French, must have scribbled by guess-work.

"You can make any loss up
With 'Spence' and his gossip,
A work which must surely succeed;
Then Queen Mary's Epistle-craft,
With the new 'Fytte' of 'Whistlecraft,'
Must make people purchase and read.

"Then you've General Gordon,
Who girded his sword on,
To serve with a Muscovite master,
And help him to polish
A nation so owlish,
They thought shaving their beards a disaster.

"For the man, '*poor and shrewd*,'[1]
With whom you'd conclude
A compact without more delay,
Perhaps some such pen is
Still extant in Venice;
But please, sir, to mention *your pay*."

LETTER 305. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, January 19. 1818.

"I send you the Story[2] in three other separate covers. It won't do for your Journal, being full of political allusions. *Print alone, without name;* alter nothing; get a scholar to see that the *Italian phrases* are correctly published, (your printing, by the way, always makes me ill with its eternal blunders, which are incessant,) and God speed you. Hobhouse left Venice a fortnight ago, saving two days. I have heard nothing of or from him.

"Yours, &c.

"He has the whole of the MSS.; so put up prayers in your back shop, or in the printer's 'Chapel.'"[3]

[1] "Vide your letter." [2] Beppo.

[3] [A Chapel is a meeting of the workmen for the purpose of making and enforcing bye-laws for the maintenance of good fellowship, and for settling any disputes that may have arisen among themselves. The person whose duty it is to call such meeting, and who usually presides, is styled "The Father of the Chapel."]

LETTER 306. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, January 27. 1818.

"My father — that is, my Armenian father, Padre Pasquali — in the name of all the other fathers of our Convent, sends you the inclosed, greeting.

"Inasmuch as it has pleased the translators of the long-lost and lately-found portions of the text of Eusebius to put forth the inclosed prospectus, of which I send six copies, you are hereby implored to obtain subscribers in the two Universities, and among the learned, and the unlearned who would unlearn their ignorance. — This *they* (the Convent) request, *I* request, and *do you* request.

"I sent you Beppo some weeks agone. You must publish it alone; it has politics and ferocity, and won't do for your isthmus of a Journal.

"Mr. Hobhouse, if the Alps have not broken his neck, is, or ought to be, swimming with my commentaries and his own coat of mail in his teeth and right hand, in a cork jacket, between Calais and Dover.

"It is the height of the Carnival, and I am in the extreme and agonies of a new intrigue with I don't exactly know whom or what, except that she is insatiate of love, and won't take money, and has light hair and blue eyes, which are not common here, and that I met her at the Masque, and that when her mask is off, I am as wise as ever. I shall make what I can of the remainder of my youth."

LETTER 307. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, February 2. 1818.

"Your letter of December 8th arrived but this day, by some delay, common but inexplicable. Your domestic calamity is very grievous, and I feel with you as much as I *dare* feel at all. Throughout life, your loss must be my loss, and your gain my gain; and, though my heart may ebb, there will always be a drop for you among the dregs.

"I know how to feel with you, because (selfishness being always the substratum of our damnable clay) I am quite wrapt up in my own children. Besides my little legitimate, I have made unto myself an *il*legimate since (to say nothing of one before [1]), and I look forward to one of these as the pillar of my old age, supposing that I ever reach — which I hope I never shall — that desolating period. I have a great love for my little Ada, though perhaps she may torture me like * * *.

"Your offered address will be as acceptable as you can wish. I don't much care what the wretches of the world think of me — all *that*'s past. But I care a good deal what *you* think of me, and, so say what you like. You *know* that I am not sullen; and, as to being *savage*, such things depend on circumstances. However, as to being in good humour in *your* society, there is no great merit in that, because it would be an effort, or an insanity, to be otherwise.

"I don't know what Murray may have been saying or quoting.[2] I called Crabbe and Sam the fathers of present Poesy; and said, that I thought — except them — *all* of '*us youth*' were on a wrong tack. But I never said that we did not sail well. Our fame will be hurt by *admiration* and *imitation*. When I say *our*, I mean *all* (Lakers included), except the postscript of the Augustans. The next generation (from the quantity and facility of imitation) will tumble and break their necks off our Pegasus, who runs away with us; but we keep the *saddle*, because we broke the rascal and can ride. But though easy to mount, he is the devil to guide; and the next fellows must go back to the riding-school and the manège, and learn to ride the 'great horse.'

"Talking of horses, by the way, I have transported my own, four in number, to the Lido (*beach* in English), a strip of some ten miles along the Adriatic, a mile or two from the city; so that I not only get a row in my gondola, but a spanking gallop of some miles daily along a firm and solitary beach, from the fortress to Malamocco, the which contributes considerably to my health and spirits.

"I have hardly had a wink of sleep this week past. We are in the agonies of the Carnival's last days, and I must be up all night again, as well as to-morrow. I have had some curious masking adventures this

[1] This possibly may have been the subject of the Poem given in p. 5.

[2] Having seen by accident the passage in one of his letters to Mr. Murray, in which he denounces, as false and worthless, the poetical system on which the greater number of his cotemporaries, as well as himself, founded their reputation, I took an opportunity, in the next letter I wrote to him, of jesting a little on this opinion, and his motives for it. It was, no doubt (I ventured to say), excellent policy in him, who had made sure of his own immortality in this style of writing, thus to throw overboard all us poor devils who were embarked with him. He was, in fact, I added, behaving towards us much in the manner of the Methodist preacher who said to his congregation — "You may think, at the Last Day, to get to heaven by laying hold on my skirts; but I'll cheat you all, for I'll wear a spencer, I'll wear a spencer!" — [This preacher was the Rev. Rowland Hill.]

Carnival; but, as they are not yet over, I shall not say on. I will work the mine of my youth to the last veins of the ore, and then — good night. I have lived, and am content.

"Hobhouse went away before the Carnival began, so that he had little or no fun. Besides, it requires some time to be thoroughgoing with the Venetians; but of all this anon, in some other letter.

"I must dress for the evening. There is an opera and ridotto, and I know not what, besides balls; and so, ever and ever yours,

"B.

"P. S. — I send this without revision, so excuse errors. I delight in the fame and fortune of Lalla, and again congratulate you on your well-merited success."

Of his daily rides on the Lido, which he mentions in this letter, the following account, by a gentleman who lived a good deal with him at Venice, will be found not a little interesting: —

"Almost immediately after Mr. Hobhouse's departure, Lord Byron proposed to me to accompany him in his rides on the Lido. One of the long narrow islands which separate the Lagune, in the midst of which Venice stands, from the Adriatic, is more particularly distinguished by this name. At one extremity is a fortification, which, with the Castle of St. Andrea on an island on the opposite side, defends the nearest entrance to the city from the sea. In times of peace this fortification is almost dismantled, and Lord Byron had hired here of the Commandant an unoccupied stable, where he kept his horses. The distance from the city was not very considerable; it was much less than to the Terra Firma, and, as far as it went, the spot was not ineligible for riding.

"Every day that the weather would permit Lord Byron called for me in his gondola, and we found the horses waiting for us outside of the fort. We rode as far as we could along the sea-shore, and then on a kind of dyke, or embankment, which has been raised where the island was very narrow, as far as another small fort about half way between the principal one which I have already mentioned, and the town or village of Malamocco, which is near the other extremity of the island, — the distance between the two forts being about three miles.

"On the land side of the embankment, not far from the smaller fort, was a boundary stone which probably marked some division of property, — all the side of the island nearest the Lagune being divided into gardens for the cultivation of vegetables for the Venetian markets. At the foot of this stone Lord Byron repeatedly told me that I should cause him to be interred, if he should die in Venice, or its neighbourhood, during my residence there; and he appeared to think, as he was not a Catholic, that, on the part of the government, there could be no obstacle to his interment in an unhallowed spot of ground by the sea-side. At all events, I was to overcome whatever difficulties might be raised on this account. I was, by no means, he repeatedly told me, to allow his body to be removed to England, nor permit any of his family to interfere with his funeral.

"Nothing could be more delightful than these rides on the Lido were to me. We were from half to three quarters of an hour crossing the water, during which his conversation was always most amusing and interesting. Sometimes he would bring with him any new book he had received, and read to me the passages which most struck him. Often he would repeat to me whole stanzas of the poems he was engaged in writing, as he had composed them on the preceding evening; and this was the more interesting to me, because I could frequently trace in them some idea which he had started in our conversation of the preceding day, or some remark, the effect of which he had been evidently trying upon me. Occasionally, too, he spoke of his own affairs, making me repeat all I had heard with regard to him, and desiring that I would not spare him, but let him know the worst that was said."

CHAPTER XXXII.

1818.

VENICE. — THE SEXAGENARIAN. — PORSON AT CAMBRIDGE. — ITALIAN TRANSLATION OF MANFRED PURCHASED AND SUPPRESSED. — LETTERS TO HOPPNER, MOORE, AND MURRAY. — VATHEK. — JUNIUS. — MILMAN'S FAZIO. — PICTURE OF VENETIAN SOCIETY. — BERNI. — RHYMING EPISTLE TO MURRAY. — LADY M. W. MONTAGUE'S LETTERS. — CAVALIER SERVENTE. — SOTHEBY. — PORTRAIT OF LEIGH HUNT. — FOX AND SHERIDAN. — NEW LIAISON. — STORY OF THE FORNARINA. — COMMENCEMENT OF DON JUAN.

LETTER 308. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, Feb. 20. 1818.

"I HAVE to thank Mr. Croker for the arrival, and you for the contents, of the parcel

which came last week, much quicker than any before, owing to Mr. Croker's kind attention, and the official exterior of the bags; and all safe, except much friction amongst the magnesia, of which only two bottles came entire; but it is all very well, and I am exceedingly obliged to you.

"The books I have read, or rather am reading. Pray, who may be the Sexagenarian[1], whose gossip is very amusing? Many of his sketches I recognise, particularly Gifford, Mackintosh, Drummond, Dutens, H. Walpole, Mrs. Inchbald, Opie, &c., with the Scotts, Loughborough, and most of the divines and lawyers, besides a few shorter hints of authors, and a few lines about a certain '*noble author*,' characterised as malignant and sceptical[2], according to the good old story, 'as it was in the beginning, is now, but *not* always shall be:' do you know such a person, Master Murray? eh?—And pray, of the booksellers, which be *you?* the dry, the dirty, the honest, the opulent, the finical, the splendid, or the coxcomb bookseller? Stap my vitals, but the author grows scurrilous in his grand climacteric!

"I remember to have seen Porson at Cambridge, in the hall of our college, and in private parties, but not frequently: and I never can recollect him except as drunk or brutal, and generally both: I mean in an evening, for in the hall he dined at the Dean's table, and I at the Vice-master's, so that I was not near him; and he then and there appeared sober in his demeanour, nor did I ever hear of excess or outrage on his part in public,—commons, college, or chapel; but I have seen him in a private party of undergraduates, many of them fresh men and strangers, take up a poker to one of them, and heard him use language as blackguard as his action. I have seen Sheridan drunk, too, with all the world; but his intoxication was that of Bacchus, and Porson's that of Silenus. Of all the disgusting brutes, sulky, abusive, and intolerable, Porson was the most bestial, as far as the few times that I saw him went, which were only at William Bankes's (the Nubian discoverer's) rooms. I saw him once go away in a rage, because nobody knew the name of the 'Cobbler of Messina,' insulting their ignorance with the most vulgar terms of reprobation. He was tolerated in this state amongst the young men for his talents, as the Turks think a madman inspired, and bear with him. He used to recite, or rather vomit, pages of all languages, and could hiccup Greek like a Helot; and certainly Sparta never shocked her children with a grosser exhibition than this man's intoxication.

"I perceive, in the book you sent me, a long account of him, which is very savage. I cannot judge, as I never saw him sober, except in *hall* or combination-room; and then I was never near enough to hear, and hardly to see him. Of his drunken deportment I can be sure, because I saw it.

"With the Reviews I have been much entertained. It requires to be as far from England as I am to relish a periodical paper properly: it is like soda-water in an Italian summer. But what cruel work you make with Lady Morgan![3] You should recollect that she is a woman; though, to be sure, they are now and then very provoking: still, as authoresses, they can do no great harm; and I think it a pity so much good invective should have been laid out upon her, when there is such a fine field of us Jacobin gentlemen for you to work upon.[4]

"I heard from Moore lately, and was sorry to be made aware of his domestic loss. Thus it is—'medio de fonte leporum'—in the acmé of his fame and of his happiness comes a drawback as usual.

"Mr. Hoppner, whom I saw this morning, has been made the father of a very fine boy.[5]

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[1] ["The Sexagenarian, or Recollections of a Literary Life," though a posthumous publication, was printed under the inspection of its author, the Rev. William Beloe, translator of Herodotus, one of the proprietors of the British Critic, and author of "Anecdotes of Literature and Scarce Books," &c. &c. He died in 1817.]

[2] ["Neither would I have you ask the *noble author*. Him, I mean, who is certainly possessed of great intellectual powers, and a peculiar turn for a certain line of poetry; but whose bad passions so perpetually insinuate themselves in every thing which he writes, that it is hardly possible to escape the injury of his venom, and scarcely worth while to separate the gold from the dross."—*Sexagenarian*, vol. ii. p. 228.]

[3] [For a review of her "France," see *Quart. Rev.* vol. xvii. p. 260.]

[4] ["It is perhaps as bitter a critique as ever was written, and enough to make sad work for Dr. Morgan, both as a husband, and an apothecary—unless she should say, as Pope did of some attack upon him, 'that it is as good for her as a dose of hartshorn.'"—*MS.*]

[5] On the birth of this child, who was christened John William Rizzo, Lord Byron wrote the four following lines, which are in no other respect remarkable than that they were thought worthy of being metrically translated into no less than ten different languages; namely, Greek, Latin, Italian (also in the Venetian dialect), German, French, Spanish, Illyrian, Hebrew, Armenian, and Samaritan:—

> "His father's sense, his mother's grace
> In him, I hope, will always fit so;
> With (still to keep him in good case)
> The health and appetite of Rizzo."

The original lines, with the different versions just mentioned, were printed, in a small neat volume (which now lies before me), in the seminary of Padua. [See *Works*, p. 571.]

— Mother and child doing very well indeed. By this time Hobhouse should be with you, and also certain packets, letters, &c. of mine, sent since his departure. —I am not at all well in health within this last eight days, My remembrances to Gifford and all friends.

"Yours, &c.

"B.

"P.S. — In the course of a month or two, Hanson will have probably to send off a clerk with conveyances to sign (Newstead being sold in November last for ninety-four thousand and five hundred pounds), in which case I supplicate supplies of articles as usual, for which desire Mr. Kinnaird to settle from funds in their bank, and deduct from my account with him.

"P. S. — To-morrow night I am going to see 'Otello,' an opera from our 'Othello,' and one of Rossini's best, it is said. It will be curious to see in Venice the Venetian story itself represented, besides to discover what they will make of Shakspeare in music."

LETTER 309. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Venice, February 28. 1818.

"My dear Sir,

"Our friend, il Conte M., threw me into a cold sweat last night, by telling me of a menaced version of Manfred (Venetian, I hope, to complete the thing) by some Italian, who had sent it to you for correction, which is the reason why I take the liberty of troubling you on the subject. If you have any means of communication with the man, would you permit me to convey to him the offer of any price he may obtain or think to obtain for his project, provided he will throw his translation into the fire[1], and promise not to undertake any other of that or any other of *my* things: I will send his money immediately on this condition.

"As I did not write *to* the Italians, nor *for* the Italians, nor *of* the Italians, (except in a poem not yet published, where I have said all the good I know or do not know of them, and none of the harm,) I confess I wish that they would let me alone, and not drag me into their arena as one of the gladiators, in a silly contest which I neither understand nor have ever interfered with, having kept clear of all their literary parties, both here and at Milan, and elsewhere. — I came into Italy to feel the climate and be quiet, if possible. Mossi's translation I would have prevented, if I had known it, or could have done so; and I trust that I shall yet be in time to stop this new gentleman, of whom I heard yesterday for the first time. He will only hurt himself, and do no good to his party, for in *party* the whole thing originates. Our modes of thinking and writing are so unutterably different, that I can conceive no greater absurdity than attempting to make any approach between the English and Italian poetry of the present day. I like the people very much, and their literature very much, but I am not the least ambitious of being the subject of their discussions literary and personal (which appear to be pretty much the same thing, as is the case in most countries); and if you can aid me in impeding this publication, you will add to much kindness already received from you by yours

"Ever and truly,

"BYRON.

"P. S. — How is *the* son, and mamma? Well, I dare say."

LETTER 310. TO MR. ROGERS.

"Venice, March 3. 1818.

"I have not, as you say, 'taken to wife the Adriatic.' I heard of Moore's loss from himself in a letter which was delayed upon the road three months. I was sincerely sorry for it, but in such cases what are words?

"The villa you speak of is one at Este, which Mr. Hoppner (Consul-general here) has transferred to me. I have taken it for two years as a place of villeggiatura. The situation is very beautiful, indeed, among the Euganean hills, and the house very fair. The vines are luxuriant to a great degree, and all the fruits of the earth abundant. It is close to the old castle of the Estes, or Guelphs, and within a few miles of Arqua, which I have visited twice, and hope to visit often.

"Last summer (except an excursion to

[1] Having ascertained that the utmost this translator could expect to make by his manuscript was two hundred francs, Lord Byron offered him that sum, if he would desist from publishing. The Italian, however, held out for more; nor could he be brought to terms, till it was intimated to him pretty plainly from Lord Byron that, should the publication be persisted in, he would horsewhip him the very first time they met. Being but little inclined to suffer martyrdom in the cause, the translator accepted the two hundred francs, and delivered up his manuscript, entering at the same time into a written engagement never to translate any other of the noble poet's works.

Of the qualifications of this person as a translator of English poetry, some idea may be formed from the difficulty he found himself under respecting the meaning of a line in the Incantation in Manfred, — "And the wisp on the morass," — which he requested of Mr. Hoppner to expound to him, not having been able to find in the dictionaries to which he had access any other signification of the word "wisp" than "a bundle of straw."

Rome) I passed upon the Brenta. In Venice I winter, transporting my horses to the Lido, bordering the Adriatic (where the fort is), so that I get a gallop of some miles daily along the strip of beach which reaches to Malamocco, when in health; but within these few weeks I have been unwell. At present I am getting better. The Carnival was short, but a good one. I don't go out much, except during the time of masques; but there are one or two conversazioni, where I go regularly, just to keep up the system, as I had letters to their givers, and they are particular on such points; and now and then, though very rarely, to the Governor's.

"It is a very good place for women. I like the dialect and their manner very much. There is a *naïveté* about them which is very winning, and the romance of the place is a mighty adjunct; the *bel sangue* is not, however, now amongst the *dame* or higher orders; but all under *i fazzioli*, or kerchiefs (a white kind of veil which the lower orders wear upon their heads);—the *vesta zendale*, or old national female costume, is no more. The city, however, is decaying daily, and does not gain in population. However, I prefer it to any other in Italy; and here have I pitched my staff, and here do I purpose to reside for the remainder of my life, unless events, connected with business not to be transacted out of England, compel me to return for that purpose; otherwise I have few regrets, and no desires to visit it again for its own sake. I shall probably be obliged to do so, to sign papers for my affairs, and a proxy for the Whigs, and to see Mr. Waite, for I can't find a good dentist here, and every two or three years one ought to consult one. About seeing my children, I must take my chance. One I shall have sent here; and I shall be very happy to see the legitimate one, when God pleases, which he perhaps will some day or other. As for my mathematical * * *, I am as well without her.

"Your account of your visit to Fonthill is very striking: could you beg of *him* for *me* a copy in MS. of the remaining *Tales*?[1] I think I deserve them, as a strenuous and public admirer of the first one. I will return it when read, and make no ill use of the copy, if granted. Murray would send me out any thing safely. If ever I return to England, I should like very much to see the author, with his permission. In the mean time, you could not oblige me more than by obtaining me the perusal I request, in French or English,—all's one for that, though I prefer Italian to either. I have a French copy of Vathek which I bought at Lausanne. I can read French with great pleasure and facility, though I neither speak nor write it. Now Italian I *can* speak with some fluency, and write sufficiently for my purposes, but I don't like their *modern* prose at all; it is very heavy, and so different from Machiavelli.

"They say Francis is Junius;—I think it looks like it.[2] I remember meeting him at Earl Grey's at dinner.[3] Has not he lately married a young woman? and was not he Madame Talleyrand's *cavaliere servente* in India years ago?

"I read my death in the papers, which was not true. I see they are marrying the remaining singleness of the royal family. They have brought out Fazio[4] with great and deserved success at Covent Garden: that's a good sign. I tried, during the directory, to have it done at Drury Lane, but was overruled. If you think of coming into this country, you will let me know perhaps beforehand. I suppose Moore won't move. Rose is here. I saw him the other night at Madame Albrizzi's: he talks of returning in May. My love to the Hollands.

"Ever, &c.

"P.S.—They have been crucifying Othello into an opera (*Otello*, by Rossini): the mu-

[1] A continuation of Vathek, by the author of that very striking and powerful production. The "Tales" of which this unpublished sequel consists are, I understand, those supposed to have been related by the Princes in the Hall of Eblis.

[2] [See Mr. Taylor's "Idendity of Junius with a distinguished living Character established," and a review of it in the Edinburgh Review, vol. xxix. p. 94. The reviewer (Lord Brougham) says, "That this work proves Sir Philip Francis to be Junius, we will not affirm; but this we can safely assert, that it accumulates such a mass of circumstantial evidence, as renders it extremely difficult to believe he is not; and that, if so many coincidences shall be found to have misled us in this case, our faith in all conclusions drawn from proofs of a similar kind may henceforth be shaken. All the evidence which can be drawn from a comparison of Junius's Letters and Sir Philip's Life and Writings points him out as the author: there is no circumstance which does not tally with this conclusion, and no difficulty which it does not explain."]

[3] [In Sir James Mackintosh's Journal for 1817, there is the following entry: "Dec. 8. Dined with Junius. His wife is a woman of informed mind and agreeable person. The vigorous hatreds which seem to keep Francis alive were very amusing. When we talked of Pitt going *down* to Cambridge, he said 'he is gone *lower* now.' Our evening was merry."—At the age of seventy-four Sir Philip married Emma, daughter of the Rev. H. Watkins, prebendary of York and Southwell. He died in December 1818, in his seventy-eighth year.]

[4] [The production of the Rev. Henry Hart Milman, of Brazen Nose College, Oxford, now Prebendary of Westminster.]

sic good, but lugubrious; but as for the words, all the real scenes with Iago cut out, and the greatest nonsense instead; the handkerchief turned into a *billet-doux*, and the first singer would not *black* his face, for some exquisite reasons assigned in the preface. Singing, dresses, and music very good."

LETTER 311. TO MR. MOORE.

"Venice, March 16. 1818.

"My dear Tom,

"Since my last, which I hope that you have received, I have had a letter from our friend Samuel. He talks of Italy this summer — won't you come with him? I don't know whether you would like our Italian way of life or not.

"They are an odd people. The other day I was telling a girl, 'You must not come to-morrow, because Margueritta is coming at such at a time,' — (they are both about five feet ten inches high, with great black eyes and fine figures — fit to breed gladiators from — and I had some difficulty to prevent a battle upon a rencontre once before,) — 'unless you promise to be friends, and' — the answer was an interruption, by a declaration of war against the other, which she said would be a 'Guerra di Candia.' Is it not odd, that the lower order of Venetians should still allude proverbially to that famous contest, so glorious and so fatal to the Republic?

"They have singular expressions, like all the Italians. For example, 'Viscere' — as we should say, 'My love,' or 'My heart,' as an expression of tenderness. Also, 'I would go for you into the midst of a hundred *knives*.' — '*Mazza ben*,' excessive attachment, — literally, 'I wish you well even to killing.' Then they say (instead of our way, 'Do you think I would do you such harm?') 'Do you think I would *assassinate* you in such a manner?' — 'Tempo *perfido*,' bad weather; 'Strade *perfide*,' bad roads, — with a thousand other allusions and metaphors, taken from the state of society and habits in the middle ages.

"I am not so sure about *mazza*, whether it don't mean *massa*, i. e. a great deal, a *mass*, instead of the interpretation I have given it. But of the other phrases I am sure.

"Three o' th' clock — I must 'to bed, to bed, to bed,' as mother S * * [Siddons], that tragical friend of the mathematical * * *, says.

"Have you ever seen — I forget what or whom — no matter. They tell me Lady Melbourne is very unwell. I shall be so sorry. She was my greatest *friend*, of the feminine gender: — when I say 'friend,' I mean *not* mistress, for that's the antipode. Tell me all about you and every body — how Sam is — how you like your neighbours, the Marquis and Marchesa, &c. &c.

"Ever, &c."

LETTER 312. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, March 25. 1818.

"I have your letter, with the account of 'Beppo,' for which I sent you four new stanzas a fortnight ago, in case you print, or reprint.

"Croker's is a good guess; but the style is not English, it is Italian; — Berni is the original of *all*. Whistlecraft was *my* immediate *model!* Rose's 'Animali'[1] I never saw till a few days ago, — they are excellent. But (as I said above) Berni is the father of that kind of writing, which, I think, suits our language, too, very well; — we shall see by the experiment. If it does, I shall send you a volume in a year or two, for I know the Italian way of life well, and in time may know it yet better; and as for the verse and the passions, I have them still in tolerable vigour.

"If you think that it will do you and the work, or works, any good, you may put my name to it; *but first consult the knowing ones*. It will, at any rate, show them that I can write cheerfully, and repel the charge of monotony and mannerism. Yours, &c."

LETTER 313. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 11. 1818.

"Will you send me by letter, packet, or parcel, half a dozen of the coloured prints from Holmes's miniature (the latter done shortly before I left your country, and the prints about a year ago)? I shall be obliged to you, as some people here have asked me for the like. It is a picture of my upright self done for Scrope B. Davies, Esq.[2]

"Why have you not sent me an answer, and list of subscribers to the translation of

[1] ["The Court of Beasts, freely translated from the Animali Parlanti of Casti, by William Stewart Rose," See *Quart. Rev.* vol. xxi. p. 486.]

[2] There follows, in this place, among other matter, a long string of verses in various metres, to the amount of about sixty lines, so full of light gaiety and humour that it is with some reluctance I suppress them. They might, however, have the effect of giving pain in quarters where even the author himself would not have deliberately inflicted it; — from a pen like his, touches may be wounds, and without being actually intended as such.

the Armenian *Eusebius?* of which I sent you printed copies of the prospectus (in French) two moons ago. Have you had the letter? — I shall send you another: — you must not neglect my Armenians. Tooth-powder, magnesia, tincture of myrrh, tooth-brushes, diachylon plaster, Peruvian bark, are my personal demands.

"Strahan, Tonson, Lintot of the times,
Patron and publisher of rhymes,
For thee the bard up Pindus climbs,
My Murray," &c. &c.[1]

LETTER 314. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April. 12. 1818.

"This letter will be delivered by Signor Gioe. Bata. Missiaglia, proprietor of the Apollo library, and the principal publisher and bookseller now in Venice. He sets out for London with a view to business and correspondence with the English booksellers; and it is in the hope that it may be for your mutual advantage that I furnish him with this letter of introduction to you. If you can be of use to him, either by recommendation to others, or by any personal attention on your own part, you will oblige him and gratify me. You may also perhaps both be able to derive advantage, or establish some mode of literary communication, pleasing to the public, and beneficial to one another.

"At any rate, be civil to him for my sake, as well as for the honour and glory of publishers and authors, now and to come for evermore.

"With him I also consign a great number of MS. letters written in English, French, and Italian, by various English established in Italy during the last century: — the names of the writers, Lord Hervey, Lady M. W. Montague (hers are but few — some billets-doux in French to Algarotti, and one letter in English-Italian, and all sorts of jargon, to the same), Gray, the poet (one letter), Mason two or three, Garrick, Lord Chatham, David Hume, and many of lesser note, — all addressed to Count Algarotti. Out of these, I think, with discretion, an amusing miscellaneous volume of letters might be extracted, provided Israeli or some other good editor were disposed to undertake the selection, and preface, and a few notes, &c.

"The proprietor of these is a friend of mine, *Dr. Aglietti*, — a great name in Italy, — and if you are disposed to publish, it will be for *his benefit*, and it is to and for him that you will name a price, if you take upon you the work. *I* would *edite* it myself, but am too far off, and too lazy to undertake it; but I wish that it could be done. The letters of Lord Hervey, in Mr. Rose's[2] opinion and mine, are good; and the *short* French love letters *certainly* are Lady M. W. Montague's — the *French* not good, but the sentiments beautiful. Gray's letter good; and Mason's tolerable. The whole correspondence must be *well weeded;* but this being done, a small and pretty popular volume might be made of it. — There are many ministers' letters — Gray, the ambassador at Naples, Horace Mann, and others of the same kind of animal.

"I thought of a preface, defending Lord Hervey against Pope's attack, but Pope — *quoad* Pope, the poet — against the world, in the unjustifiable attempts begun by Warton and carried on to and at this day by the new school of critics and scribblers, who think themselves poets because they do *not* write like Pope. I have no patience with such cursed humbug and bad taste; your whole generation are not worth a canto of the Rape of the Lock, or the Essay on Man, or the Dunciad, or 'any thing that is his.' — But it is three in the matin, and I must go to bed. Yours always, &c."

LETTER 315. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 17. 1818.

"A few days ago, I wrote to you a letter, requesting you to desire Hanson to desire his messenger to come on from Geneva to Venice, because I won't go from Venice to Geneva; and if this is not done, the messenger may be damned, with him who missent him. Pray reiterate my request.

"With the proofs returned, I sent two additional stanzas for Canto fourth: did they arrive?

"Your Monthly reviewer has made a mistake: *Cavaliere*, alone, is well enough; but

[1] See Works, p. 570.

[2] Among Lord Byron's papers, I find some verses addressed to him, about this time, by Mr. W. Rose, with the following note annexed to them: — "These verses were sent to me by W. S. Rose, from Abaro, in the spring of 1818. They are good and true; and Rose is a fine fellow, and one of the few English who understand *Italy*, without which Italian is nothing." The verses begin thus: —

"Byron*, while you make gay what circle fits ye,
Bandy Venetian slang with the Benzòn,
Or play at company with the Albrizzi,
The self-pleased pedant, and patrician crone,
Grimanis, Mocenigos, Balbis, Rizzi,
Compassionate our cruel case, — alone,
Our pleasure an academy of frogs,
Who nightly serenade us from the bogs," &c. &c.
[See BYRONIANA.]

* "I have *hunted* out a precedent for this unceremonious address."

'*Cavalier' servente*' has always the *e* mute in conversation, and omitted in writing; so that it is not for the sake of metre; and pray let Griffiths know this, with my compliments. I humbly conjecture that I know as much of Italian society and language as any of his people; but, to make assurance doubly sure, I asked, at the Countess Benzona's last night, the question of more than one person in *the office*, and of these 'cavalieri serventi' (in the plural, recollect) I found that they all accorded in pronouncing for 'cavalier' servente' in the *singular* number. I wish Mr. Hodgson (or whoever Griffiths' scribbler may be) would not talk of what he don't understand. Such fellows are not fit to be intrusted with Italian, even in a quotation.

"Did you receive two additional stanzas, to be inserted towards the close of Canto fourth? Respond, that (if not) they may be sent.

"Tell Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Hanson that they may as well expect Geneva to come to me, as that I should go to Geneva. The messenger may go on or return, as he pleases; I won't stir: and I look upon it as a piece of singular absurdity in those who know me imagining that I should; — not to say *malice*, in attempting unnecessary torture. If, on the occasion, my interests should suffer, it is their neglect that is to blame; and they may all be d—d together.

"It is ten o'clock, and time to dress.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 316. TO MR. MURRAY.

"April 23. 1818.

"The time is past in which I could feel for the dead, — or I should feel for the death of Lady Melbourne, the best, and kindest, and ablest female I ever knew, old or young. But 'I have supped full of horrors,' and events of this kind leave only a kind of numbness worse than pain, — like a violent blow on the elbow, or the head. There is one link less between England and myself.

"Now to business. I presented you with Beppo, as part of the contract for Canto fourth, — considering the price you are to pay for the same, and intending it to eke you out in case of public caprice or my own poetical failure. If you choose to suppress it entirely, at Mr. Sotheby's suggestion, you may do as you please. But recollect it is not to be published in a *garbled* or *mutilated* state. I reserve to my friends and myself the right of correcting the press; — if the publication continue, it is to continue in its present form.

"As Mr. Sotheby says that he did not write this letter, &c. I am ready to believe him; but for the firmness of my former persuasion, I refer to Mr. Hobhouse, who can inform you how sincerely I erred on this point. He has also the note — or, at least, had it, for I gave it to him with my verbal comments thereupon. As to 'Beppo,' I will not alter or suppress a syllable for any man's pleasure but my own.

"You may tell them this; and add, that nothing but force or necessity shall stir me one step towards places to which they would wring me.

"If your literary matters prosper, let me know. If 'Beppo' pleases, you shall have more in a year or two in the same mood. And so 'Good morrow to you, good Master Lieutenant.'

Yours, &c."

LETTER 317. TO MR. MOORE.

"Palazzo Mocenigo, Canal Grande,
Venice, June 1. 1818.

"Your letter is almost the only news, as yet, of Canto fourth, and it has by no means settled its fate, — at least, does not tell me how the 'Poeshie' has been received by the public. But, I suspect, no great things, — firstly, from Murray's 'horrid stillness;' secondly, from what you say about the stanzas running into each other[1], which I take *not* to be *yours*, but a notion you have been dinned with among the Blues. The fact is, that the terza rima of the Italians, which always *runs* on and in, may have led me into experiments, and carelessness into conceit — or conceit into carelessness — in either of which events failure will be probable, and my fair woman, 'superne,' end in a fish[2]; so that Childe Harold will be like the mermaid, my family crest, with the fourth Canto for a tail thereunto. I won't quarrel with the public, however, for the 'Bulgars' are generally right; and if I miss now, I may hit another time: — and so, the 'gods give us joy.'

"You like Beppo, that's right. I have not had the Fudges yet, but live in hopes. I need not say that your successes are mine. By the way, Lydia White is here, and has just borrowed my copy of 'Lalla Rookh.'

"Hunt's letter is probably the exact piece of vulgar coxcombry you might expect from his situation. He is a good man, with some poetical elements in his chaos; but spoilt by the Christ-Church Hospital and a Sunday

[1] I had said, I think, in my letter to him, that this practice of carrying one stanza into another was "something like taking on horses another stage without baiting."

[2] ["Desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne."— HOR.]

newspaper, — to say nothing of the Surrey gaol, which conceited him into a martyr. But he is a good man. When I saw 'Rimini' in MS., I told him that I deemed it good poetry at bottom, disfigured only by a strange style. His answer was, that his style was a system, or *upon system*, or some such cant; and, when a man talks of system, his case is hopeless: so I said no more to him, and very little to any one else.

"He believes his trash of vulgar phrases tortured into compound barbarisms to be *old* English; and we may say of it as Aimwell says of Captain Gibbet's regiment, when the Captain calls it an 'old corps,' — 'the *oldest* in Europe, if I may judge by your uniform.' He sent out his 'Foliage' by Percy Shelley * * *, and, of all the ineffable Centaurs that were ever begotten by Self-love upon a Night-mare, I think this monstrous Sagittary the most prodigious. *He* (Leigh H.) is an honest charlatan, who has persuaded himself into a belief of his own impostures, and talks Punch in pure simplicity of heart, taking himself (as poor Fitzgerald said of *him*self in the Morning Post) for *Vates* in both senses, or nonsenses, of the word. Did you look at the translations of his own which he prefers to Pope and Cowper, and says so?[1] — Did you read his skimble-skamble about Wordsworth being at the head of his own *profession*[2], in the *eyes* of *those* who followed it? I thought that poetry was an *art*, or an *attribute*, and not a *profession*; — but be it one, is that * * * * * * at the head of *your* profession in *your* eyes? I'll be curst if he is of *mine*, or ever shall be. He is the only one of us (but of us he is not) whose coronation I would oppose. Let them take Scott, Campbell, Crabbe, or you, or me, or any of the living, and throne him; — but not this new Jacob Behmen, this * * * * * * whose pride might have kept him true, even had his principles turned as perverted as his *soi-disant* poetry.

"But Leigh Hunt is a good man, and a good father — see his Odes to all the Masters Hunt; — a good husband — see his Sonnet to Mrs. Hunt; — a good friend — see his Epistles to different people; — and a great coxcomb and a very vulgar person in every thing about him. But that's not his fault, but of circumstances.[3]

"I do not know any good model for a life of Sheridan but that of *Savage*. Recollect, however, that the life of such a man may be made far more amusing than if he had been a Wilberforce; — and this without offending the living, or insulting the dead. The Whigs abuse him; however, he never left them, and such blunderers deserve neither credit nor compassion. — As for his creditors, — remember, Sheridan *never had* a shilling, and was thrown, with great powers and passions, into the thick of the world, and placed upon the pinnacle of success, with no other external means to support him in his elevation. Did Fox * * * *pay his* debts? — or did Sheridan take a subscription? Was the * *'s drunkenness more excusable than his? Were his intrigues more notorious than those of all his contemporaries? and is his memory to be blasted, and theirs respected? Don't let yourself be led away by clamour, but compare him with the coalitioner Fox, and the pensioner Burke, as a man of principle, and with ten hundred thousand in personal views, and with none in talent, for he beat them all *out* and *out*. Without means, without connexion, without character, (which might be false at first, and make him mad afterwards from desperation,) he beat them all, in all he ever attempted. But alas, poor human nature! Good night — or rather, morning. It is four, and the dawn gleams over the Grand Canal, and unshadows the Rialto. I must to bed; up all night — but, as George Philpot says, 'it's life, though, damme, it's life!' Ever yours, B.

"Excuse errors — no time for revision. The post goes out at noon, and I shan't be up then. I will write again soon about your *plan* for a publication."

During the greater part of the period which this last series of letters comprises, he had continued to occupy the same lodgings in an extremely narrow street called the Spezieria, at the house of the linendraper, to whose lady he devoted so much of his thoughts. That he was, for the time, attached to this person, — as far as a passion so transient can deserve the name of attachment, — is evident

[1] ["My translations from Homer are an experiment how far I could give the intelligent reader, who is no scholar, a stronger sense of the natural energy of the original, than has yet been furnished him. Cowper's poetical vigour was spoiled by the over-frigidity of his constitution; and Pope, in that elegant mistake in two volumes octavo, called Homer's Iliad, turns the Dodonæan oak of his original into smooth little toys," &c. &c. — *Hunt's Foliage*, p. 31.]

[2] ["Wordsworth is generally felt, among his own *profession*, to be at the head of it." — *Ib.* p. 14.]

[3] I had, in first transcribing the above letter for the press, omitted the whole of this caustic, and, perhaps, over-severe character of Mr. Hunt; but the tone of that gentleman's book having, as far as himself is concerned, released me from all those scruples which prompted the suppression, I have considered myself at liberty to restore the passage.

from his whole conduct. The language of his letters shows sufficiently how much the novelty of this foreign tie had caught his fancy; and to the Venetians, among whom such arrangements are mere matters of course, the assiduity with which he attended his Signora to the theatre, and the ridottos, was a subject of much amusement. It was with difficulty, indeed, that he could be prevailed upon to absent himself from her so long as to admit of that hasty visit to the Immortal City, out of which one of his own noblest titles to immortality sprung; and having, in the space of a few weeks, drunk in more inspiration from all he saw than, in a less excited state, possibly, he might have imbibed in years, he again hurried back, without extending his journey to Naples, — having written to the fair Marianna to meet him at some distance from Venice.

Besides some seasonable acts of liberality to the husband, who had, it seems, failed in trade, he also presented to the lady herself a handsome set of diamonds; and there is an anecdote related in reference to this gift, which shows the exceeding easiness and forbearance of his disposition towards those who had acquired any hold on his heart. A casket, which was for sale, being one day offered to him, he was not a little surprised on discovering them to be the same jewels which he had, not long before, presented to his fair favourite, and which had, by some unromantic means, found their way back into the market. Without enquiring, however, any further into the circumstances, he generously repurchased the casket, and presented it to the lady once more, good-humouredly taxing her with the very little estimation in which, as it appeared, she held his presents.

To whatever extent this unsentimental incident may have had a share in dispelling the romance of his passion, it is certain that, before the expiration of the first twelvemonth, he began to find his lodgings in the Spezieria inconvenient, and accordingly entered into treaty with Count Gritti [1] for his palace on the Grand Canal, — engaging to give for it what is considered, I believe, a large rent in Venice, 200 louis a year. On finding, however, that, in the counterpart of the lease brought for his signature, a new clause had been introduced, prohibiting him not only from underletting the house, in case he should leave Venice, but from even allowing any of his own friends to occupy it during his occasional absence, he declined closing on such terms; and resenting so material a departure from the original engagement, declared in society, that he would have no objection to give the same rent, though acknowledged to be exorbitant, for any other palace in Venice, however inferior, in all respects, to Count Gritti's. After such an announcement, he was not likely to remain long unhoused; and the Countess Mocenigo having offered him one of her three palazzi, on the Grand Canal, he removed to this house in the summer of the present year, and continued to occupy it during the remainder of his stay in Venice.

Highly censurable, in point of morality and decorum, as was his course of life while under the roof of Madame Segati, it was (with pain I am forced to confess) venial in comparison with the strange, headlong career of licence to which, when weaned from that connexion, he so unrestrainedly and, it may be added, defyingly abandoned himself. Of the state of his mind on leaving England I have already endeavoured to

[1] [Of this Count Gritti, a celebrated poet and humorist, several amusing anecdotes are told by Mr. Rose: *e. g.* "Having arrived at Vicenza, for the purpose of taking the Recoaro waters, knowing the proverbial curiosity of the natives, and observing the general hubbub excited by his presence, he retired into a coffee-house, called for pen, ink, and paper, wrote down an account in verse of his 'birth, parentage, and education,' and left it for the information of the curious impertinents of the place: —

"Nobili, cittadini, e mercadanti,
Uomini, donne, popol di Vicenza,
Che interrogate cavalieri e fanti
Per aver de' miei, fatti conoscenza,
E mi adocchiate il da dietro e'l d'avanti
Per pesarmi in sostanza e in apparenza,
Eccovi tutto ciò che mi risguarda!
E andate a letto, perchè l'ora è tarda.

"Il mio nome è Francesco, *alias* Checco,
Son Gritti di famiglia e in linea torta
Scendo da quell' Andrea fù doge e becco,
Il di cui figlio s'adoperò alla Porta.
Sono magro poco meno d'uno stecco,
La fronte ho calva e la veduta corta,
L'anno afferrami il cul' quarantunesimo,
Ed ho meco la fede del battesimo."

"Boor, burgher, baron, born of better root,
Vicentines all, (to make a general clearance,)
Who stand and stare, and question horse and foot
Of me and my affairs, in hopes to bear hence
Some fag-end of a tale or foolish bruit —
You who would sift me, substance and appearance,
Have whatsoe'er concerns my style and state,
And get to bed, good people; for it's late!

"Francisco christen'd, Gritti born and suckled
I am descended, in a twisted sort,
From that fam'd Andrea, sometime doge and cuckold,
Whose son so stoutly stirr'd him at the Port.
I'm lean as Pharaoh's kine, in wedlock buckled,
But childless; therewithal am bald, and short
Of sight — not one and forty — if you doubt me,
I've my baptismal register about me."

Letters from Italy, vol. i. p. 208.]

convey some idea, and, among the feelings that went to make up that self-centred spirit of resistance which he then opposed to his fate, was an indignant scorn of his own countrymen for the wrongs he thought they had done him. For a time, the kindly sentiments which he still harboured towards Lady Byron, and a sort of vague hope, perhaps, that all would yet come right again, kept his mind in a mood somewhat more softened and docile, as well as sufficiently under the influence of English opinion to prevent his breaking out into such open rebellion against it, as he unluckily did afterwards.

By the failure of the attempted mediation with Lady Byron, his last link with home was severed; while, notwithstanding the quiet and unobtrusive life which he had led at Geneva, there was as yet, he found, no cessation of the slanderous warfare against his character; — the same busy and misrepresenting spirit which had tracked his every step at home having, with no less malicious watchfulness, dogged him into exile. To this persuasion, for which he had but too much grounds, was added all that an imagination like his could lend to truth, — all that he was left to interpret, in his own way, of the absent and the silent, — till, at length, arming himself against fancied enemies and wrongs, and, with the condition (as it seemed to him) of an outlaw, assuming also the desperation, he resolved, as his countrymen would not do justice to the better parts of his nature, to have, at least, the perverse satisfaction of braving and shocking them with the worst. It is to this feeling, I am convinced, far more than to any depraved taste for such a course of life, that the extravagances to which he now, for a short time, gave loose, are to be attributed. The exciting effect, indeed, of this mode of existence while it lasted, both upon his spirits and his genius, — so like what, as he himself tells us, was always produced in him by a state of contest and defiance, — showed how much of this latter feeling must have been mixed with his excesses. The altered character too of his letters in this respect cannot fail, I think, to be remarked by the reader, — there being, with an evident increase of intellectual vigour, a tone of violence and bravado breaking out in them continually, which marks the high pitch of re-action to which he had now wound up his temper.

In fact, so far from the powers of his intellect being at all weakened or dissipated by these irregularities, he was, perhaps, at no time of his life, so actively in the full possession of all its energies; and his friend Shelley, who went to Venice, at this period, to see him[1], used to say, that all he observed of the workings of Byron's mind, during his visit, gave him a far higher idea of its powers than he had ever before entertained. It was, indeed, then that Shelley sketched out, and chiefly wrote, his poem of "Julian and Maddalo," in the latter of which personages he has so picturesquely shadowed forth his noble friend[2]; and the allusions to "the Swan of Albion," in his "Lines written among the Euganean Hills," were also, I understand, the result of the same access of admiration and enthusiasm.

[1] The following are extracts from a letter of Shelley's to a friend at this time: —

"Venice, August, 1818.

"We came from Padua hither in a gondola; and the gondolier, among other things, without any hint on our part, began talking of Lord Byron. He said he was a 'a Giovanetto Inglese,' with a 'nome stravagante,' who lived very luxuriously, and spent great sums of money.

"At three o'clock I called on Lord Byron. He was delighted to see me, and our first conversation of course consisted in the object of our visit. He took me in his gondola, across the Laguna, to a long, strandy sand, which defends Venice from the Adriatic. When we disembarked, we found his horses waiting for us, and we rode along the sands, talking. Our conversation consisted in histories of his own wounded feelings, and questions as to my affairs, with great professions of friendship and regard for me. He said that if he had been in England, at the time of the Chancery affair, he would have moved heaven and earth to have prevented such a decision. He talked of literary matters, — his fourth canto, which he says is very good, and indeed repeated some stanzas, of great energy, to me. When we returned to his palace, which is one of the most magnificent in Venice," &c. &c.

[2] In the preface also to this poem, under the fictitious name of Count Maddalo, the following just and striking portrait of Lord Byron is drawn: —

"He is a person of the most consummate genius, and capable, if he would direct his energies to such an end, of becoming the redeemer of his degraded country. But it is his weakness to be proud: he derives, from a comparison of his own extraordinary mind with the dwarfish intellects that surround him, an intense apprehension of the nothingness of human life. His passions and his powers are incomparably greater than those of other men, and instead of the latter having been employed in curbing the former, they have mutually lent each other strength. His ambition preys upon itself for want of objects which it can consider worthy of exertion. I say that Maddalo is proud, because I can find no other word to express the concentred and impatient feelings which consume him; but it is on his own hopes and affections only that he seems to trample, for in social life no human being can be more gentle, patient, and unassuming than Maddalo. He is cheerful, frank, and witty. His more serious conversation is a sort of intoxication. He has travelled much; and there is an inexpressible charm in his relation of his adventures in different countries." — [See Byroniana.]

In speaking of the Venetian women, in one of the preceding letters, Lord Byron, it will be recollected, remarks, that the beauty for which they were once so celebrated is no longer now to be found among the "Dame," or higher orders, but all under the "fazzioli," or kerchiefs, of the lower. It was, unluckily, among these latter specimens of the "bel sangue," of Venice that he now, by a suddenness of descent in the scale of refinement, for which nothing but the present wayward state of his mind can account, chose to select the companions of his disengaged hours; — and an additional proof that, in this short, daring career of libertinism, he was but desperately seeking relief for a wronged and mortified spirit, and

"What to us seem'd guilt might be but woe," —

is that, more than once, of an evening, when his house has been in the possession of such visitants, he has been known to hurry away in his gondola, and pass the greater part of the night upon the water, as if hating to return to his home. It is, indeed, certain, that to this least defensible portion of his whole life he always looked back, during the short remainder of it, with painful self-reproach; and among the causes of the detestation which he afterwards felt for Venice, this recollection of the excesses to which he had there abandoned himself was not the least prominent.

The most distinguished and, at last, the reigning favourite of all this unworthy Harem was a woman named Margarita Cogni, who has been already mentioned in one of these letters, and who, from the trade of her husband, was known by the title of the Fornarina. A portrait of this handsome virago, drawn by Harlowe when at Venice, having fallen into the hands of one of Lord Byron's friends after the death of that artist, the noble poet, on being applied to for some particulars of his heroine, wrote a long letter on the subject, from which the following are extracts: —

"Since you desire the story of Margarita Cogni, you shall be told it, though it may be lengthy.

"Her face is the fine Venetian cast of the old time; her figure, though perhaps too tall, is not less fine — and taken altogether in the national dress.

"In the summer of 1817, Hobhouse and myself were sauntering on horseback along the Brenta one evening, when, amongst a group of peasants, we remarked two girls as the prettiest we had seen for some time. About this period, there had been great distress in the country, and I had a little relieved some of the people. Generosity makes a great figure at very little cost in Venetian livres, and mine had probably been exaggerated as an Englishman's. Whether they remarked us looking at them or no, I know not; but one of them called out to me in Venetian, 'Why do not you, who relieve others, think of us also?' I turned round and answered her — 'Cara, tu sei troppo bella e giovane per aver' bisogna del' soccorso mio.' She answered, 'If you saw my hut and my food, you would not say so.' All this passed half jestingly, and I saw no more of her for some days.

"A few evenings after, we met with these two girls again, and they addressed us more seriously, assuring us of the truth of their statement. They were cousins; Margarita married, the other single. As I doubted still of the circumstances, I took the business in a different light, and made an appointment with them for the next evening. In short, in a few evenings we arranged our affairs, and for a long space of time she was the only one who preserved over me an ascendency which was often disputed, and never impaired.

"The reasons of this were, firstly, her person; — very dark, tall, the Venetian face, very fine black eyes. She was two-and-twenty years old, * * * She was, besides, a thorough Venetian in her dialect, in her thoughts, in her countenance, in every thing, with all their *naïveté* and pantaloon humour. Besides, she could neither read nor write, and could not plague me with letters, — except twice that she paid sixpence to a public scribe, under the piazza, to make a letter for her, upon some occasion when I was ill and could not see her. In other respects, she was somewhat fierce and 'prepotente,' that is, overbearing, and used to walk in whenever it suited her, with no very great regard to time, place, nor persons; and if she found any women in her way, she knocked them down.

"When I first knew her, I was in 'relazione' (liaison) with la Signora Segati, who was silly enough one evening at Dolo, accompanied by some of her female friends, to threaten her; for the gossips of the villeggiatura had already found out, by the neighing of my horse one evening, that I used to 'ride late in the night' to meet the Fornarina. Margarita threw back her veil (fazziolo), and replied in very explicit Venetian, '*You* are *not* his *wife*: *I* am *not* his *wife*: you are his Donna, and *I* am his *Donna*: your husband is a *becco*, and mine is another. For the rest, what *right* have you to reproach me? If he prefers me to you, is it my fault? If

you wish to secure him, tie him to your petticoat-string. But do not think to speak to me without a reply, because you happen to be richer than I am.' Having delivered this pretty piece of eloquence (which I translate as it was related to me by a by-stander), she went on her way, leaving a numerous audience with Madame Segati, to ponder at her leisure on the dialogue between them.

"When I came to Venice for the winter, she followed; and as she found herself out to be a favourite, she came to me pretty often. But she had inordinate self-love, and was not tolerant of other women. At the 'Cavalchina,' the masked ball on the last night of the carnival, where all the world goes, she snatched off the mask of Madame Contarini, a lady noble by birth, and decent in conduct, for no other reason, but because she happened to be leaning on my arm. You may suppose what a cursed noise this made; but this is only one of her pranks.

"At last she quarrelled with her husband, and one evening ran away to my house. I told her this would not do: she said she would lie in the street, but not go back to him; that he beat her (the gentle tigress!), spent her money, and scandalously neglected her. As it was midnight I let her stay, and next day there was no moving her at all. Her husband came, roaring and crying, and entreating her to come back: — *not* she! He then applied to the police, and they applied to me: I told them and her husband to *take* her; I did not want her; she had come, and I could not fling her out of the window; but they might conduct her through that or the door if they chose it. She went before the commissary, but was obliged to return with that 'becco ettico,' as she called the poor man, who had a phthisic. In a few days she ran away again. After a precious piece of work, she fixed herself in my house, really and truly without my consent; but, owing to my indolence, and not being able to keep my countenance, for if I began in a rage, she always finished by making me laugh with some Venetian pantaloonery or another; and the gipsy knew this well enough, as well as her other powers of persuasion, and exerted them with the usual tact and success of all she-things; high and low, they are all alike for that.

"Madame Benzoni also took her under her protection, and then her head turned. She was always in extremes, either crying or laughing; and so fierce when angered, that she was the terror of men, women, and children — for she had the strength of an Amazon, with the temper of Medea. She was a fine animal, but quite untameable. *I* was the only person that could at all keep her in any order, and when she saw me really angry (which they tell me is a savage sight), she subsided. But she had a thousand fooleries. In her fazziolo, the dress of the lower orders, she looked beautiful; but, alas! she longed for a hat and feathers; and all I could say or do (and I said much) could not prevent this travestie. I put the first into the fire; but I got tired of burning them, before she did of buying them, so that she made herself a figure — for they did not at all become her.

"Then she would have her gowns with a *tail* — like a lady, forsooth; nothing would serve her but 'l'abita colla *coua*,' or *cua*, (that is the Venetian for 'la cola,' the tail or train,) and as her cursed pronunciation of the word made me laugh, there was an end of all controversy, and she dragged this diabolical tail after her every where.

"In the mean time, she beat the women and stopped my letters. I found her one day pondering over one. She used to try to find out by their shape whether they were feminine or no; and she used to lament her ignorance, and actually studied her alphabet, on purpose (as she declared) to open all letters addressed to me and read their contents.

"I must not omit to do justice to her housekeeping qualities. After she came into my house as 'donna di governo,' the expenses were reduced to less than half, and every body did their duty better — the apartments were kept in order, and every thing and every body else, except herself.

"That she had a sufficient regard for me in her wild way, I had many reasons to believe. I will mention one. In the autumn, one day, going to the Lido with my gondoliers, we were overtaken by a heavy squall, and the gondola put in peril — hats blown away, boat filling, oar lost, tumbling sea, thunder, rain in torrents, night coming, and wind unceasing. On our return, after a tight struggle, I found her on the open steps of the Mocenigo palace, on the Grand Canal, with her great black eyes flashing through her tears, and the long dark hair, which was streaming, drenched with rain, over her brows and breast. She was perfectly exposed to the storm; and the wind blowing her hair and dress about her thin tall figure, and the lightning flashing round her, and the waves rolling at her feet, made her look like Medea alighted from her chariot, or the Sibyl of the tempest that was rolling around her, the only living thing within hail at that moment except ourselves. On seeing me safe, she

did not wait to greet me, as might have been expected, but calling out to me — 'Ah! can' della Madonna, xe esto il tempo per andar' al' Lido?' (Ah! dog of the Virgin, is this a time to go to Lido?) ran into the house, and solaced herself with scolding the boatmen for not foreseeing the 'temporale.' I am told by the servants that she had only been prevented from coming in a boat to look after me, by the refusal of all the gondoliers of the canal to put out into the harbour in such a moment; and that then she sat down on the steps in all the thickest of the squall, and would neither be removed nor comforted. Her joy at seeing me again was moderately mixed with ferocity, and gave me the idea of a tigress over her recovered cubs.

"But her reign drew near a close. She became quite ungovernable some months after; and a concurrence of complaints, some true, and many false — 'a favourite has no friends' — determined me to part with her. I told her quietly that she must return home, (she had acquired a sufficient provision for herself and mother, &c. in my service,) and she refused to quit the house. I was firm, and she went threatening knives and revenge. I told her that I had seen knives drawn before her time, and that if she chose to begin, there was a knife, and fork also, at her service on the table, and that intimidation would not do. The next day, while I was at dinner, she walked in, (having broken open a glass door that led from the hall below to the staircase, by way of prologue,) and, advancing straight up to the table, snatched the knife from my hand, cutting me slightly in the thumb in the operation. Whether she meant to use this against herself or me, I know not — probably against neither — but Fletcher seized her by the arms, and disarmed her. I then called my boatmen, and desired them to get the gondola ready, and conduct her to her own house again, seeing carefully that she did herself no mischief by the way. She seemed quite quiet, and walked down stairs. I resumed my dinner.

"We heard a great noise, and went out, and met them on the staircase, carrying her up stairs. She had thrown herself into the canal. That she intended to destroy herself, I do not believe; but when we consider the fear women and men who can't swim have of deep or even of shallow water, (and the Venetians in particular, though they live on the waves,) and that it was also night, and dark, and very cold, it shows that she had a devilish spirit of some sort within her. They had got her out without much difficulty or damage, excepting the salt water she had swallowed, and the wetting she had undergone.

"I foresaw her intention to refix herself, and sent for a surgeon, enquiring how many hours it would require to restore her from her agitation; and he named the time. I then said, 'I give you that time, and more if you require it; but at the expiration of this prescribed period, if *she* does not leave the house, *I* will.'

"All my people were consternated. They had always been frightened at her, and were now paralysed: they wanted me to apply to the police, to guard myself, &c. &c. like a pack of snivelling servile boobies as they were. I did nothing of the kind, thinking that I might as well end that way as another; besides, I had been used to savage women, and knew their ways.

"I had her sent home quietly after her recovery, and never saw her since, except twice at the opera, at a distance amongst the audience. She made many attempts to return, but no more violent ones. And this is the story of Margarita Cogni, as far as it relates to me.

"I forgot to mention that she was very devout, and would cross herself if she heard the prayer time strike.

"She was quick in reply; as, for instance — One day when she had made me very angry with beating somebody or other, I called her a *cow* (*cow*, in Italian, is a sad affront). I called her 'vacca.' She turned round, courtesied, and answered, 'vacca *tua*, 'celenza' (*i. e.* Eccelenza). '*Your* cow, please your Excellency.' In short, she was, as I said before, a very fine animal, of considerable beauty and energy, with many good and several amusing qualities, but wild as a witch and fierce as a demon. She used to boast publicly of her ascendency over me, contrasting it with that of other women, and assigning for it sundry reasons. True it was, that they all tried to get her away, and no one succeeded till her own absurdity helped them.

"I omitted to tell you her answer, when I reproached her for snatching Madame Contarini's mask at the Cavalchina. I represented to her that she was a lady of high birth, 'una Dama,' &c. She answered, 'Se ella è dama *mi* (*io*) son Veneziana;'—'If she is a lady, I am a Venetian.' This would have been fine a hundred years ago, the pride of the nation rising up against the pride of aristocracy: but, alas! Venice, and her people, and her nobles, are alike returning fast to the ocean; and where there is no independence, there can be no real self-respect. I believe that I mistook or mis-stated one of

her phrases in my letter; it should have been — ' Can' della Madonna cosa vus' tu? esto non è tempo per andar' à Lido?'"

It was at this time, as we shall see by the letters I am about to produce, and as the features, indeed, of the progeny itself would but too plainly indicate, that he conceived, and wrote some part of, his poem of 'Don Juan;' — and never did pages more faithfully, and, in many respects, lamentably, reflect every variety of feeling, and whim, and passion, that, like the rack of autumn, swept across the author's mind in writing them. Nothing less, indeed, than that singular combination of attributes, which existed and were in full activity in his mind at this moment, could have suggested, or been capable of the execution of, such a work. The cool shrewdness of age, with the vivacity and glowing temperament of youth, — the wit of a Voltaire, with the sensibility of a Rousseau, — the minute, practical knowledge of the man of society, with the abstract and self-contemplative spirit of the poet, — a susceptibility of all that is grandest and most affecting in human virtue, with a deep, withering experience of all that is most fatal to it, — the two extremes, in short, of man's mixed and inconsistent nature, now rankly smelling of earth, now breathing of heaven, — such was the strange assemblage of contrary elements, all meeting together in the same mind, and all brought to bear, in turn, upon the same task, from which alone could have sprung this extraordinary poem, — the most powerful and, in many respects, painful display of the versatility of genius that has ever been left for succeeding ages to wonder at and deplore.

I shall now proceed with his correspondence, — having thought some of the preceding observations necessary, not only to explain to the reader much of what he will find in these letters, but to account to him for much that has been necessarily omitted.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

1818—1819.

VENICE. — LETTERS TO MURRAY. — ODE ON VENICE. — AUTOBIOGRAPHY PROJECTED. — ANECDOTE BY CAPTAIN BASIL HALL. — FIRST AND SECOND CANTOS OF DON JUAN. — LETTERS TO MURRAY AND MOORE. — SHERIDAN. — DR. PARR. — UGO FOSCOLO. — INTRODUCTION TO MADAME GUICCIOLI. — ANECDOTES. — POLIDORI AND THE VAMPIRE STORY. — DEPARTURE FOR RAVENNA. — STANZAS TO THE PO.

LETTER 318. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, June 18. 1818.

"BUSINESS and the utter and inexplicable silence of all my correspondents render me impatient and troublesome. I wrote to Mr. Hanson for a balance which is (or ought to be) in his hands; — no answer. I expected the messenger with the Newstead papers two months ago, and, instead of him, I received a requisition to proceed to Geneva, which (from Hobhouse, who knows my wishes and opinions about approaching England) could only be irony or insult.

"I must, therefore, trouble *you* to pay into my bankers' *immediately* whatever sum or sums you can make it convenient to do on our agreement; otherwise, I shall be put to the *severest* and most immediate inconvenience; and this at a time when, by every rational prospect and calculation, I ought to be in the receipt of considerable sums. Pray do not neglect this; you have no idea to what inconvenience you will otherwise put me. Hobhouse had some absurd notion about the disposal of this money in annuity (or God knows what), which I merely listened to when he was here to avoid squabbles and sermons; but I have occasion for the principal, and had never any serious idea of appropriating it otherwise than to answer my personal expenses. Hobhouse's wish is, if possible, to force me back to England[1]: he will not succeed; and if he did, I would not stay. I hate the country, and like this; and all foolish opposition, of course, merely adds to the feeling. *Your* silence makes me doubt the success of Canto fourth. If it has failed, I will make such deduction as you think proper and fair from the original agreement; but I could wish whatever is to be paid were remitted to me, without delay, through the usual channel, by course of post.

"When I tell you that I have not heard a word from England since very early in May, I have made the eulogium of my friends, or the persons who call themselves so, since I have written so often and in the greatest anxiety. Thank God the longer I am absent, the less cause I see for regretting the country or its living contents.

"I am yours,

"B."

[1] Deeply is it, for many reasons, to be regretted that this friendly purpose did not succeed.

LETTER 319. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, July 10. 1818.

"I have received your letter and the credit from Morlands, &c.; for whom I have also drawn upon you at sixty days' sight for the remainder, according to your proposition.

"I am still waiting in Venice, in expectancy of the arrival of Hanson's clerk. What can detain him, I do not know; but I trust that Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Kinnaird, when their political fit is abated, will take the trouble to enquire and expedite him, as I have nearly a hundred thousand pounds depending upon the completion of the sale and the signature of the papers.

"The draft on you is drawn up by Siri and Willhalm. I hope that the form is correct. I signed it two or three days ago, desiring them to forward it to Messrs. Morland and Ransom.

"Your projected editions for November had better be postponed, as I have some things in project, or preparation, that may be of use to you, though not very important in themselves. I have completed an Ode on Venice; and have two Stories, one serious and one ludicrous (à la Beppo), not yet finished, and in no hurry to be so.

"You talk of the letter to Hobhouse being much admired, and speak of prose. I think of writing (for your full edition) some Memoirs of my life, to prefix to them, upon the same model (though far enough, I fear, from reaching it) as that of Gifford, Hume, &c.; and this without any intention of making disclosures or remarks upon living people, which would be unpleasant to them: but I think it might be done, and well done. However, this is to be considered. I have *materials* in plenty, but the greater part of them could not be used by *me*, nor for these hundred years to come. However, there is enough without these, and merely as a literary man, to make a preface for such an edition as you meditate. But this is by the way: I have not made up my mind.

"I enclose you a *note* on the subject of '*Parisina*,' which Hobhouse can dress for you. It is an extract of particulars from a history of Ferrara.

"I trust you have been attentive to Missiaglia, for the English have the character of neglecting the Italians, at present, which I hope you will redeem.

"Yours in haste, B."

LETTER 320. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, July 17. 1818.

"I suppose that Aglietti will take whatever you offer, but till his return from Vienna I can make him no proposal; nor, indeed, have you authorised me to do so. The three French notes *are* by Lady Mary; also another half-English-French-Italian. They are very pretty and passionate; it is a pity that a piece of one of them is lost. Algarotti seems to have treated her ill; but she was much his senior, and all women are used ill — or say so, whether they are or not.

"I shall be glad of your books and powders. I am still in waiting for Hanson's clerk, but luckily not at Geneva. All my good friends wrote to me to hasten *there* to meet him, but not one had the good sense or the good nature to write afterwards to tell me that it would be time and a journey thrown away, as he could not set off for some months after the period appointed. If I *had* taken the journey on the general suggestion, I never would have spoken again to one of you as long as I existed. I have written to request Mr. Kinnaird, when the foam of his politics is wiped away, to extract a positive answer from that * * * *, and not to keep me in a state of suspense upon the subject. I hope that Kinnaird, who has my power of attorney, keeps a look-out upon the gentleman, which is the more necessary, as I have a great dislike to the idea of coming over to look after him myself.

"I have several things begun, verse and prose, but none in much forwardness. I have written some six or seven sheets of a Life, which I mean to continue, and send you when finished. It may perhaps serve for your projected editions. If you would tell me exactly (for I know nothing, and have no correspondents except on business) the state of the reception of our late publications, and the feeling upon them, without consulting any delicacies (I am too seasoned to require them), I should know how and in what manner to proceed. I should not like to give them too much, which may probably have been the case already; but, as I tell you, I know nothing.

"I once wrote from the fullness of my mind and the love of fame, (not as an *end*, but a *means*, to obtain that influence over men's minds which is power in itself and in its consequences,) and now from habit and from avarice; so that the effect may probably be as different as the inspiration. I have the same facility, and indeed necessity, of composition, to avoid idleness (though idleness in a hot country is a pleasure), but a much greater indifference to what is to become of it, after it has served my immediate purpose. However, I should on no account like to —— but I won't go on, like the Arch-

bishop of Granada, as I am very sure that you dread the fate of Gil Blas, and with good reason. Yours, &c.

"P. S. — I have written some very savage letters to Mr. Hobhouse, Kinnaird, to you, and to Hanson, because the silence of so long a time made me tear off my remaining rags of patience. I have seen one or two late English publications which are no great things, except Rob Roy. I shall be glad of Whistlecraft."

LETTER 321. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, August 26. 1818.

"You may go on with your edition, without calculating on the Memoir, which I shall not publish at present. It is nearly finished, but will be too long; and there are so many things, which, out of regard to the living, cannot be mentioned, that I have written with too much detail of that which interested me least; so that my autobiographical Essay would resemble the tragedy of Hamlet at the country theatre, recited 'with the part of Hamlet left out by particular desire.' I shall keep it among my papers; it will be a kind of guide-post in case of death, and prevent some of the lies which would otherwise be told, and destroy some which have been told already.

"The tales also are in an unfinished state, and I can fix no time for their completion: they are also *not* in the best manner. You must not, therefore, calculate upon any thing in time for this edition. The Memoir is already above forty-four sheets of very large, long paper, and will be about fifty or sixty; but I wish to go on leisurely; and when finished, although it might do a good deal for you at the time, I am not sure that it would serve any good purpose in the end to either, as it is full of many passions and prejudices, of which it has been impossible for me to keep clear: — I have not the patience.

"Enclosed is a list of books which Dr. Aglietti would be glad to receive by way of price for his MS. letters, if you are disposed to purchase at the rate of fifty pounds sterling. These he will be glad to have as part, and the rest *I* will give him in money, and you may carry it to the account of books, &c. which is in balance against me, deducting it accordingly. So that the letters are yours, if you like them, at this rate; and he and I are going to hunt for more Lady Montague letters, which he thinks of finding. I write in haste. Thanks for the article, and believe me

"Yours, &c."

To the charge brought against Lord Byron by some English travellers of being, in general, repulsive and inhospitable to his own countrymen, I have already made allusion; and shall now add to the testimony then cited in disproof of such a charge some particulars, communicated to me by Captain Basil Hall, which exhibit the courtesy and kindliness of the noble poet's disposition in their true, natural light.

"On the last day of August, 1818 (says this distinguished writer and traveller), I was taken ill with an ague at Venice, and having heard enough of the low state of the medical art in that country, I was not a little anxious as to the advice I should take. I was not acquainted with any person in Venice to whom I could refer, and had only one letter of introduction, which was to Lord Byron; but as there were many stories floating about of his Lordship's unwillingness to be pestered with tourists, I had felt unwilling, before this moment, to intrude myself in that shape. Now, however, that I was seriously unwell, I felt sure that this offensive character would merge in that of a countryman in distress, and I sent the letter by one of my travelling companions to Lord Byron's lodgings, with a note, excusing the liberty I was taking, explaining that I was in want of medical assistance; and saying I should not send to any one till I heard the name of the person who, in his Lordship's opinion, was the best practitioner in Venice.

"Unfortunately for me, Lord Byron was still in bed, though it was near noon; and still more unfortunately, the bearer of my message scrupled to awake him, without first coming back to consult me. By this time I was in all the agonies of a cold ague fit, and, therefore, not at all in a condition to be consulted upon any thing — so I replied pettishly, 'Oh, by no means disturb Lord Byron on my account — ring for the landlord, and send for any one he recommends.' This absurd injunction being forthwith and literally attended to, in the course of an hour I was under the discipline of mine host's friend, whose skill and success it is no part of my present purpose to descant upon: — it is sufficient to mention, that I was irrevocably in his hands long before the following most kind note was brought to me, in great haste, by Lord Byron's servant.

"'Venice, August 31. 1818.

"'Dear Sir,

"'Dr. Aglietti is the best physician, not only in Venice, but in Italy: his resi-

dence is on the Grand Canal, and easily found; I forget the number, but am probably the only person in Venice who don't know it. There is no comparison between him and any of the other medical people here. I regret very much to hear of your indisposition, and shall do myself the honour of waiting upon you the moment I am up. I write this in bed, and have only just received the letter and note. I beg you to believe that nothing but the extreme lateness of my hours could have prevented me from replying immediately, or coming in person. I have not been called a minute. — I have the honour to be, very truly,

" ' Your most obedient servant,

" ' Byron.'

" His Lordship soon followed this note, and I heard his voice in the next room; but although he waited more than an hour, I could not see him, being under the inexorable hands of the doctor. In the course of the same evening he again called, but I was asleep. When I awoke I found his Lordship's valet sitting by my bedside. ' He had his master's orders,' he said, ' to remain with me while I was unwell, and was instructed to say, that whatever his Lordship had, or could procure, was at my service, and that he would come to me and sit with me, or do whatever I liked, if I would only let him know in what way he could be useful.'

" Accordingly, on the next day, I sent for some book, which was brought, with a list of his library. I forget what it was which prevented my seeing Lord Byron on this day, though he called more than once; and on the next, I was too ill with fever to talk to any one.

" The moment I could get out, I took a gondola and went to pay my respects, and to thank his Lordship for his attentions. It was then nearly three o'clock, but he was not yet up; and when I went again on the following day at five, I had the mortification to learn that he had gone, at the same hour, to call upon me, so that we had crossed each other on the canal; and, to my deep and lasting regret, I was obliged to leave Venice without seeing him."

Letter 322. TO MR. MOORE.

" Venice, September 19. 1818.

" An English newspaper here would be a prodigy, and an opposition one a monster; and except some extracts *from* extracts in the vile, garbled Paris gazettes, nothing of the kind reaches the Veneto-Lombard public, who are, perhaps, the most oppressed in Europe. My correspondences with England are mostly on business, and chiefly with my * * *, who has no very exalted notion, or extensive conception, of an author's attributes; for he once took up an Edinburgh Review, and, looking at it a minute, said to me, ' So, I see you have got into the magazine,' — which is the only sentence I ever heard him utter upon literary matters, or the men thereof.

" My first news of your Irish Apotheosis has, consequently, been from yourself. But, as it will not be forgotten in a hurry, either by your friends or your enemies, I hope to have it more in detail from some of the former, and, in the mean time, I wish you joy with all my heart. Such a moment must have been a good deal better than Westminster Abbey,—besides being an assurance of *that* one day (many years hence, I trust), into the bargain.

" I am sorry to perceive, however, by the close of your letter, that even *you* have not escaped the ' surgit amari,' &c., and that your damned deputy has been gathering such ' dew from the still *vext* Bermoothes' — or rather *vexatious*. Pray, give me some items of the affair, as you say it is a serious one; and, if it grows more so, you should make a trip over here for a few months, to see how things turn out. I suppose you are a violent admirer of England by your staying so long in it. For my own part, I have passed, between the age of one-and-twenty and thirty, half the intervenient years out of it without regretting any thing, except that I ever returned to it at all, and the gloomy prospect before me of business and parentage obliging me, one day, to return to it again, — at least, for the transaction of affairs, the signing of papers, and inspecting of children.

" I have here my natural daughter, by name Allegra, — a pretty little girl enough, and reckoned like papa.[1] Her mamma is

[1] This little child had been sent to him by its mother about four or five months before, under the care of a Swiss nurse, a young girl not above nineteen or twenty years of age, and in every respect unfit to have the charge of such an infant, without the superintendence of some more experienced person. " The child, accordingly," says my informant, " was but ill-taken care of; — not that any blame could attach to Lord Byron, for he always expressed himself most anxious for her welfare, but because the nurse wanted the necessary experience. The poor girl was equally to be pitied; for, as Lord Byron's household consisted of English and Italian men servants, with whom she could hold no converse, and as there was no other female to consult with and assist her in her charge, nothing could be more forlorn than her situation proved to be." Soon after the date of the above letter, Mrs. Hoppner,

English,—but it is a long story, and—there's an end. She is about twenty months old.

"I have finished the first canto (a long one, of about 180 octaves) of a poem in the style and manner of 'Beppo,' encouraged by the good success of the same. It is called 'Don Juan,' and is meant to be a little quietly facetious upon every thing. But I doubt whether it is not — at least, as far as it has yet gone — too free for these very modest days. However, I shall try the experiment, anonymously; and if it don't take, it will be discontinued. It is dedicated to Southey in good, simple, savage verse, upon the * * * *'s politics, and the way he got them. But the bore of copying it out is intolerable; and if I had an amanuensis he would be of no use, as my writing is so difficult to decipher.

"My poem's Epic, and is meant to be
Divided in twelve books, each book containing,
With love and war, a heavy gale at sea —
A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning —
New characters, &c. &c.

The above are two stanzas, which I send you as a brick of my Babel, and by which you can judge of the texture of the structure.

"In writing the Life of Sheridan, never mind the angry lies of the humbug Whigs. Recollect that he was an Irishman and a clever fellow, and that *we* have had some very pleasant days with him. Don't forget that he was at school at Harrow, where, in my time, we used to show his name — R. B. Sheridan, 1765, — as an honour to the walls. Remember * *. Depend upon it that there were worse folks going, of that gang, than ever Sheridan was.

"What did Parr mean by 'haughtiness and coldness?' I listened to him with admiring ignorance, and respectful silence. What more could a talker for fame have? — they don't like to be answered. It was at Payne Knight's I met him, where he gave me more Greek than I could carry away. But I certainly meant to (and *did*) treat him with the most respectful deference.

"I wish you a good night, with a Venetian benediction, 'Benedetto te, e la terra che ti fara!' — 'May you be blessed, and the *earth* which you will *make!*' — is it not pretty? You would think it still prettier if you had heard it, as I did two hours ago, from the lips of a Venetian girl, with large black eyes, a face like Faustina's, and the figure of a Juno — tall and energetic as a Pythoness, with eyes flashing, and her dark hair streaming in the moonlight — one of those women who may be made any thing. I am sure if I put a poniard into the hand of this one, she would plunge it where I told her, — and into *me*, if I offended her. I like this kind of animal, and am sure that I should have preferred Medea to any woman that ever breathed. You may, perhaps, wonder that I don't in that case. * * * I could have forgiven the dagger or the bowl, — any thing, but the deliberate desolation piled upon me, when I stood alone upon my hearth, with my household gods shivered around me.[1] * * Do you suppose I have forgotten it? It has comparatively swallowed up in me every other feeling, and I am only a spectator upon earth, till a tenfold opportunity offers. It may come yet. There are others more to be blamed than * * * *, and it is on these that my eyes are fixed unceasingly."

LETTER 323. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, September 24. 1818.

"In the one hundredth and thirty-second stanza of Canto fourth, the stanza runs in the manuscript —

"And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!

and *not* '*lost*,' which, is nonsense, as what losing a scale means, I know not; but *leaving* an unbalanced scale, or a scale unbalanced, is intelligible. Correct this, I pray, — not for the public, or the poetry; but I do not choose to have blunders made in addressing any of the deities, so seriously as this is addressed. "Yours, &c.

"P. S. — In the translation from the Spanish, alter

"In increasing squadrons flew,

to —

"To a mighty squadron grew.

---

the lady of the Consul-General, who had, from the first, in compassion both to father and child, invited the little Allegra occasionally to her house, very kindly proposed to Lord Byron to take charge of her altogether, and an arrangement was accordingly concluded upon for that purpose.

[1] "I had one only fount of quiet left,
And *that* they poison'd! *My pure household gods*
Were shiver'd on my hearth." *Marino Faliero.*

["Whate'er might be his worthlessness or worth,
Poor fellow! he had many things to wound him,
Let's own — since it can do no good on earth —
It was a trying moment that which found him
Standing alone beside his desolate hearth;
Where all his household gods lay shiver'd round him.
No choice was left his feelings or his pride," &c.&c.
Don Juan, c. i. st. 36.]

"What does 'thy waters *wasted* them' mean (in the Canto)? *That is not me.* Consult the MS. *always.*

"I have written the first Canto (180 octave stanzas) of a poem in the style of Beppo, and have Mazeppa to finish besides.

"In referring to the mistake in stanza 132. I take the opportunity to desire that in future, in all parts of my writings referring to religion, you will be more careful, and not forget that it is possible that in addressing the Deity a blunder may become a blasphemy; and I do not choose to suffer such infamous perversions of my words or of my intentions.

"I saw the canto by accident."

LETTER 324. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, January 20. 1819.

"The opinions which I have asked of Mr. Hobhouse and others were with regard to poetical merit, and not as to what they may think due to the *cant* of the day, which still reads the Bath Guide, Little's Poems, Prior and Chaucer, to say nothing of Fielding and Smollett. If published, publish entire, with the above-mentioned exceptions; or you may publish anonymously, or *not* at *all.* In the latter event, print 50 on my account, for private distribution.

"Yours, &c.

"I have written to Messrs. Kinnaird and Hobhouse to desire that they will not erase more than I have stated.

"The second canto of Don Juan is finished in 206 stanzas."

LETTER 325. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, January 25. 1819.

"You will do me the favour to print privately (for private distribution) fifty copies of 'Don Juan.' The list of the men to whom I wish it to be presented, I will send hereafter. The other two poems had best be added to the collective edition: I do not approve of *their* being published separately. *Print* Don Juan *entire*, omitting, of course, the lines on Castlereagh, as I am not on the spot to meet him. I have a second canto ready, which will be sent by and by. By this post, I have written to Mr. Hobhouse, addressed to your care.

"Yours, &c.

"B.

"P. S—I have acquiesced in the request and representation; and having done so, it is idle to detail my arguments in favour of my own self-love and 'Poeshie;' but I *protest.* If the poem has poetry, it would stand; if not, fall: the rest is 'leather and prunello,' and has never yet affected any human production 'pro or con.' Dulness is the only annihilator in such cases. As to the cant of the day, I despise it, as I have ever done all its other finical fashions, which become you as paint became the ancient Britons. If you admit this prudery, you must omit half Ariosto, La Fontaine, Shakspeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Massinger, Ford, all the Charles Second writers; in short, *something* of most who have written before Pope and are worth reading, and much of Pope himself. *Read him*—most of you *don't*—but *do*—and I will forgive you; though the inevitable consequence would be that you would burn all I have ever written, and all your other wretched Claudians of the day (except Scott and Crabbe) into the bargain. I wrong Claudian, who *was* a *poet*, by naming him with such fellows; but he was the 'ultimus Romanorum,' the tail of the comet, and these persons are the tail of an old gown cut into a waistcoat for Jackey; but being both *tails*, I have compared one with the other, though very unlike, like all similes. I write in a passion and a sirocco, and I was up till six this morning at the Carnival; but I *protest*, as I did in my former letter."

LETTER 326. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, February 1. 1819.

"After one of the concluding stanzas of the first canto of 'Don Juan,' which ends with (I forget the number)—

"To have . . . . . .
. . . . . when the original is dust,
A book, a d—d bad picture, and worse bust,

insert the following stanza—

"What are the hopes of man, &c.

"I have written to you several letters, some with additions, and some upon the subject of the poem itself, which my cursed puritanical committee have protested against publishing. But we will circumvent them on that point. I have not yet begun to copy out the second canto, which is finished, from natural laziness, and the discouragement of the milk and water they have thrown upon the first. I say all this to them as to you; that is, for *you* to say to *them*, for I will have nothing underhand. If they had told me the poetry was bad, I would have acquiesced; but they say the contrary, and then talk to me about morality

—the first time I ever heard the word from any body who was not a rascal that used it for a purpose. I maintain that it is the most moral of poems; but if people won't discover the moral, that is their fault, not mine. I have already written to beg that in any case you will print *fifty* for private distribution. I will send you the list of persons to whom it is to be sent afterwards.

"Within this last fortnight I have been rather indisposed with a rebellion of stomach, which would retain nothing, (liver, I suppose,) and an inability, or fantasy, not to be able to eat of any thing with relish but a kind of Adriatic fish called 'scampi,' which happens to be the most indigestible of marine viands. However, within these last two days, I am better, and very truly yours."

LETTER 327. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, April 6. 1819.

"The second canto of Don Juan was sent, on Saturday last, by post, in four packets, two of four, and two of three sheets each, containing in all two hundred and seventeen stanzas, octave measure. But I will permit no curtailments, except those mentioned about Castlereagh and * * * *.[1] You sha'n't make *canticles* of my cantos. The poem will please, if it is lively; if it is stupid, it will fail; but I will have none of your damned cutting and slashing. If you please, you may publish *anonymously;* it will perhaps be better; but I will battle my way against them all, like a porcupine.

"So you and Mr. Foscolo, &c. want me to undertake what you call a 'great work?' an Epic Poem, I suppose, or some such pyramid. I'll try no such thing; I hate tasks. And then 'seven or eight years!' God send us all well this day three months, let alone years. If one's years can't be better employed than in sweating poesy, a man had better be a ditcher. And works, too!—is Childe Harold nothing? You have so many '*divine*' poems, is it nothing to have written a *human* one? without any of your worn-out machinery. Why, man, I could have spun the thoughts of the four cantos of that poem into twenty, had I wanted to book-make, and its passion into as many modern tragedies. Since you want *length*, you shall have enough of *Juan*, for I'll make fifty cantos.

"And Foscolo, too! Why does *he* not do something more than the Letters of Ortis, and a tragedy[2], and pamphlets? He has good fifteen years more at his command than I have: what has he done all that time?—proved his genius, doubtless, but not fixed its fame, nor done his utmost.

"Besides, I mean to write my best work in *Italian*, and it will take me nine years more thoroughly to master the language; and then if my fancy exist, and I exist too, I will try what I *can* do *really*. As to the estimation of the English which you talk of, let them calculate what it is worth, before they insult me with their insolent condescension.

"I have not written for their pleasure. If they are pleased, it is that they chose to be so; I have never flattered their opinions, nor their pride; nor will I. Neither will I make 'Ladies' books' 'al dilettar le femine e la plebe.' I have written from the fulness of my mind, from passion, from impulse, from many motives, but not for their 'sweet voices.'

"I know the precise worth of popular applause, for few scribblers have had more of it; and if I chose to swerve into their paths, I could retain it, or resume it. But I neither love ye, nor fear ye; and though I buy with ye and sell with ye, and talk with ye, I will neither eat with ye, drink with ye, nor pray with ye. They made me, without my search, a species of popular idol; they, without reason or judgment, beyond the caprice of their good pleasure, threw down the image from its pedestal; it was not broken with the fall, and they would, it seems, again replace it,—but they shall not.

"You ask about my health: about the beginning of the year I was in a state of great exhaustion, attended by such debility of stomach that nothing remained upon it; and I was obliged to reform my 'way of life,' which was conducting me from the 'yellow leaf' to the ground, with all deliberate speed. I am better in health and morals, and very much yours, &c.

"P.S.—I have read Hodgson's 'Friends.' He is right in defending Pope against the bastard pelicans of the poetical winter day, who add insult to their parricide, by sucking the blood of the parent of English *real* poetry,—poetry without fault,—and then spurning the bosom which fed them."

It was about the time when the foregoing letter was written, and when, as we perceive, like the first return of reason after intoxication, a full consciousness of some of the

[1] ["The two Bobs in the Introduction." See *Works*, p. 588.]

[2] ["Ricciarda." For an account of it, see Quarterly Review, vol. xxiv. p. 90. Foscolo was a Greek by birth, a native of Zante. He died at Chiswick, in 1827, in his fiftieth year.]

evils of his late libertine course of life had broken upon him, that an attachment differing altogether, both in duration and devotion, from any of those that, since the dream of his boyhood, had inspired him, gained an influence over his mind which lasted through his few remaining years; and, undeniably wrong and immoral (even allowing for the Italian estimate of such frailties) as was the nature of the connection to which this attachment led, we can hardly perhaps, — taking into account the far worse wrong from which it rescued and preserved him, — consider it otherwise than as an event fortunate both for his reputation and happiness.

The fair object of this last, and (with one signal exception) only *real* love of his whole life, was a young Romagnese lady, the daughter of Count Gamba, of Ravenna, and married, but a short time before Lord Byron first met her, to an old and wealthy widower, of the same city, Count Guiccioli. Her husband had in early life been the friend of Alfieri, and had distinguished himself by his zeal in promoting the establishment of a National Theatre, in which the talents of Alfieri and his own wealth were to be combined. Notwithstanding his age, and a character, as it appears, by no means reputable, his great opulence rendered him an object of ambition among the mothers of Ravenna, who, according to the too frequent maternal practice, were seen vying with each other in attracting so rich a purchaser for their daughters; and the young Teresa Gamba, not yet sixteen, and just emancipated from a convent, was the selected victim.

The first time Lord Byron had ever seen this lady was in the autumn of 1818, when she made her appearance, three days after her marriage, at the house of the Countess Albrizzi, in all the gaiety of bridal array, and the first delight of exchanging a convent for the world. At this time, however, no acquaintance ensued between them; — it was not till the spring of the present year that, at an evening party of Madame Benzoni's, they were introduced to each other. The love that sprung out of this meeting was instantaneous and mutual, though with the usual disproportion of sacrifice between the parties; such an event being, to the man, but one of the many scenes of life, while, with woman, it generally constitutes the whole drama. The young Italian found herself suddenly inspired with a passion, of which, till that moment, her mind could not have formed the least idea; — she had thought of love but as an amusement, and now became its slave. If at the outset, too, less slow to be won than an Englishwoman, no sooner did she begin to understand the full despotism of the passion than her heart shrunk from it as something terrible, and she would have escaped, but that the chain was already around her.

No words, however, can describe so simply and feelingly as her own, the strong impression which their first meeting left upon her mind: —

"I became acquainted (says Madame Guiccioli) with Lord Byron in the April of 1819: — he was introduced to me at Venice, by the Countess Benzoni, at one of that lady's parties. This introduction, which had so much influence over the lives of us both, took place contrary to our wishes, and had been permitted by us only from courtesy. For myself, more fatigued than usual that evening on account of the late hours they keep at Venice, I went with great repugnance to this party, and purely in obedience to Count Guiccioli. Lord Byron, too, who was averse to forming new acquaintances, — alleging that he had entirely renounced all attachments, and was unwilling any more to expose himself to their consequences, — on being requested by the Countess Benzoni to allow himself to be presented to me, refused, and, at last, only assented from a desire to oblige her.

"His noble and exquisitely beautiful countenance, the tone of his voice, his manners, the thousand enchantments that surrounded him, rendered him so different and so superior a being to any whom I had hitherto seen, that it was impossible he should not have left the most profound impression upon me. From that evening, during the whole of my subsequent stay at Venice, we met every day."[1]

[1] "Nell' Aprile del 1819, io feci la conoscenza di Lord Byron; e mi fu presentato a Venezia dalla Contessa Benzoni nella di lei società. Questa presentazione che ebbe tante consequenze per tutti i due fu fatta contro la volontà d'entrambi, e solo per condiscendenza l'abbiamo permessa. Io stanca più che mai quella sera par le ore tarde che si costuma fare in Venezia andai con molta ripugnanza e solo per ubbidire al Conte Guiccioli in quella società. Lord Byron che scansava di fare nuove conoscenze, dicendo sempre che aveva interamente rinunciato alle passioni e che non voleva esporsi più alle loro consequenze, quando la Contessa Benzoni lo pregò di volersi far presentare a me egli recusò, e solo per la compiàcenza glielo permise. La nobile e bellissima sua fisonomia, il suono della sua voce, le sue maniere, i mille incanti che lo circondavano lo rendevano un essere così differente, così superiore a tutti quelli che io aveva sino allora veduti che non potei a meno di non provarne la più profonda impressione. Da quella sera in poi in tutti i giorni che mi fermai in Venezia ei siamo sempre veduti." — *MS.*

LETTER 328. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, May 15. 1819.

"I have got your extract, and the 'Vampire.' I need not say it is *not mine*. There is a rule to go by: you are my publisher (till we quarrel), and what is not published by you is not written by me.

"Next week I set out for Romagna — at least, in all probability. You had better go on with the publications, without waiting to hear farther, for I have other things in my head. 'Mazeppa' and the 'Ode' separate? — what think you? *Juan anonymous, without the Dedication;* for I won't be shabby, and attack Southey under cloud of night.

"Yours, &c."

In another letter on the subject of the Vampire, I find the following interesting particulars: —

"TO MR. MURRAY.

"The story of Shelley's agitation is true.[1] I can't tell what seized him, for he don't want courage. He was once with me in a gale of wind, in a small boat, right under the rocks between Meillerie and St. Gingo. We were five in the boat — a servant, two boatmen, and ourselves. The sail was mismanaged, and the boat was filling fast. He can't swim. I stripped off my coat, made him strip off his, and take hold of an oar, telling him that I thought (being myself an expert swimmer) I could save him, if he would not struggle when I took hold of him — unless we got smashed against the rocks, which were high and sharp, with an awkward surf on them at that minute. We were then about a hundred yards from shore, and the boat in peril. He answered me with the greatest coolness, 'that he had no notion of being saved, and that I would have enough to do to save myself, and begged not to trouble me.' Luckily, the boat righted, and, bailing, we got round a point into St. Gingo, where the inhabitants came down and embraced the boatmen on their escape, the wind having been high enough to tear up some huge trees from the Alps above us, as we saw next day.

"And yet the same Shelley, who was as cool as it was possible to be in such circumstances, (of which I am no judge myself, as the chance of swimming naturally gives self-possession when near shore,) certainly had the fit of phantasy which Polidori describes, though *not exactly* as he describes it.

"The story of the agreement to write the ghost-books is true; but the ladies are *not* sisters. Mary Godwin (now Mrs. Shelley) wrote Frankenstein, which you[2] have reviewed, thinking it Shelley's. Methinks it is a wonderful book for a girl of nineteen, — *not* nineteen, indeed, at that time. I enclose you the beginning of mine, by which you will see how far it resembles Mr. Colburn's publication. If you choose to publish it in the Edinburgh Magazine, you may, *stating why*, and with such explanatory proem as you please. I never went on with it, as you will perceive by the date. I began it in an old account-book of Miss Milbanke's, which I kept because it contains the word 'Household,' written by her twice on the inside blank page of the covers, being the only two scraps I have in the world in her writing, except her name to the Deed of Separation. Her letters I sent back except those of the quarrelling correspondence, and those, being documents, are placed in the hands of a third person, with copies of several of my own; so that I have no kind of memorial whatever of her, but these two words, — and her actions. I have torn the leaves containing the part of the Tale out of the book, and enclose them with this sheet.

"What do you mean? First you seem hurt by my letter, and then, in your next, you talk of its 'power,' and so forth. 'This is a d—d blind story, Jack; but never mind,

[1] This story, as given in the Preface to the "Vampire," is as follows: —

"It appears that one evening Lord B., Mr. P. B. Shelley, two ladies, and the gentleman before alluded to, after having perused a German work called Phantasmagoria, began relating ghost stories, when his Lordship having recited the beginning of Christabel, then unpublished, the whole took so strong a hold of Mr. Shelley's mind, that he suddenly started up, and ran out of the room. The physician and Lord Byron followed, and discovered him leaning against a mantel-piece, with cold drops of perspiration trickling down his face. After having given him something to refresh him, upon enquiring into the cause of his alarm, they found that his wild imagination having pictured to him the bosom of one of the ladies with eyes (which was reported of a lady in the neighbourhood where he lived), he was obliged to leave the room in order to destroy the impression."

[2] [In Blackwood's Magazine, of which Mr. Murray was then a co-proprietor, there appeared an article on Frankenstein by Sir Walter Scott, in which the reviewer says, "The author seems to us to disclose uncommon powers of poetic imagination. It is no slight merit in our eyes, that the tale, though wild in incident, is written in plain and forcible English, without exhibiting that mixture of hyperbolical Germanisms with which tales of wonder are usually told, as if it were necessary that the language should be as extravagant as the fiction. The ideas of the author are always clearly as well as forcibly expressed; and his descriptions of landscape have in them the choice requisites of truth, freshness, precision, and beauty."—See *Scott's Miscell. Prose Works*, vol. xvii. p. 250.]

go on.' You may be sure I said nothing *on purpose* to plague you; but if you will put me 'in a frenzy, I will never call you *Jack* again.' I remember nothing of the epistle at present.

"What do you mean by Polidori's *Diary?* Why, I defy him to say any thing about me, but he is welcome. I have nothing to reproach me with on his score, and I am much mistaken if that is not his *own* opinion. But why publish the names of the two girls? and in such a manner? — what a blundering piece of exculpation! *He* asked Pictet, &c. to dinner, and of course was left to entertain them. I went into society *solely* to present *him* (as I told him), that he might return into good company if he chose; it was the best thing for his youth and circumstances: for myself, I had done with society, and, having presented him, withdrew to my own 'way of life.' It is true that I returned without entering Lady Dalrymple Hamilton's, because I saw it full. It is true that Mrs. Hervey (she writes novels)[1] fainted at my entrance into Coppet, and then came back again. On her fainting, the Duchesse de Broglie exclaimed, 'This is *too much* — at *sixty-five* years of age!' — I never gave 'the English' an opportunity of 'avoiding' me; but I trust that, if ever I do, they will seize it. With regard to Mazeppa and the Ode, you may join or separate them, as you please, from the two Cantos.

"Don't suppose I want to put you out of humour. I have a great respect for your good and gentlemanly qualities, and return your personal friendship towards me; and although I think you a little spoilt by 'villanous company,' — wits, persons of honour about town, authors, and fashionables, together with your 'I am just going to call at Carlton House, are you walking that way?' — I say, notwithstanding 'pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses,' you deserve and possess the esteem of those whose esteem is worth having, and of none more (however useless it may be) than yours very truly, &c.

"B.

"P. S. — Make my respects to Mr. Gifford. I am perfectly aware that 'Don Juan' must set us all by the ears, but that is my concern, and my beginning. There will be the 'Edinburgh,' and all, too, against it; so that, like 'Rob Roy,' I shall have my hands full."

[1] ["Workfield Castle," "Castle of Tynemouth," "The Governor of Bielleville," "Memoirs of an Author," "Records of a Noble Family," &c. &c.]

LETTER 329. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, May 25. 1819.

"I have received no proofs by the last post, and shall probably have quitted Venice before the arrival of the next. There wanted a few stanzas to the termination of Canto first in the last proof; the next will, I presume, contain them, and the whole or a portion of Canto second; but it will be idle to wait for further answers from me, as I have directed that my letters wait for my return (perhaps in a month, and probably so); therefore do not wait for further advice from me. You may as well talk to the wind, and better— for *it* will at least convey your accents a little further than they would otherwise have gone; whereas *I* shall neither echo nor acquiesce in your 'exquisite reasons.' You may omit the *note* of reference to Hobhouse's travels, in Canto second, and you will put as motto to the whole —

"'Difficile est proprie communia dicere.' — HORACE.

"A few days ago I sent you all I know of Polidori's Vampire. He may do, say, or write what he pleases, but I wish he would not attribute to me his own compositions. If he has any thing of mine in his possession, the MS. will put it beyond controversy; but I scarcely think that any one who knows me would believe the thing in the Magazine to be mine, even if they saw it in my own hieroglyphics.

"I write to you in the agonies of a *sirocco*, which annihilates me; and I have been fool enough to do four things since dinner, which are as well omitted in very hot weather: 1stly, ****; 2dly, to play at billiards from 10 to 12, under the influence of lighted lamps, that doubled the heat; 3dly, to go afterwards into a red-hot conversazione of the Countess Benzoni's; and, 4thly, to begin this letter at three in the morning: but being begun, it must be finished.

"Ever very truly and affectionately yours,

"B.

"P. S. — I petition for tooth-brushes, powder, magnesia, Macassar oil (or Russia), *the* sashes, and Sir Nl. Wraxall's Memoirs of his own Times. I want, besides, a bulldog, a terrier, and two Newfoundland dogs; and I want (is it Buck's?) a Life of *Richard* 3*d*, advertised by Longman *long*, *long*, *long* ago; I asked you for it at least three years since. See Longman's advertisements."

About the middle of April, Madame Guiccioli had been obliged to quit Venice with her husband. Having several houses on the road from Venice to Ravenna, it was

his habit to stop at these mansions, one after the other, in his journeys between the two cities; and from all these places the enamoured young Countess now wrote to Lord Byron, expressing, in the most passionate and pathetic terms, her despair at leaving him. So utterly, indeed, did this feeling overpower her, that three times, in the course of her first day's journey, she was seized with fainting fits. In one of her letters, which I saw when at Venice, dated, if I recollect right, from "Cà Zen, Cavanelle di Po," she tells him that the solitude of this place, which she had before found irksome, was, now that one sole idea occupied her mind, become dear and welcome to her, and promises that, as soon as she arrives at Ravenna, "she will, according to his wish, avoid all general society, and devote herself to reading, music, domestic occupations, riding on horseback,—every thing, in short, that she knew he would most like." What a change for a young and simple girl, who, but a few weeks before, had thought only of society and the world, but who now saw no other happiness but in the hope of making herself worthy, by seclusion and self-instruction, of the illustrious object of her devotion!

On leaving this place, she was attacked with a dangerous illness on the road, and arrived half dead at Ravenna; nor was it found possible to revive or comfort her till an assurance was received from Lord Byron, expressed with all the fervour of real passion, that, in the course of the ensuing month, he would pay her a visit. Symptoms of consumption, brought on by her state of mind, had already shown themselves; and, in addition to the pain which this separation had caused her, she was also suffering much grief from the loss of her mother, who, at this time, died in giving birth to her fourteenth child. Towards the latter end of May she wrote to acquaint Lord Byron that, having prepared all her relatives and friends to expect him, he might now, she thought, venture to make his appearance at Ravenna. Though, on the lady's account, hesitating as to the prudence of such a step, he, in obedience to her wishes, on the 2d of June, set out from La Mira (at which place he had again taken a villa for the summer), and proceeded towards Romagna.

From Padua he addressed a letter to Mr. Hoppner, chiefly occupied with matters of household concern which that gentleman had undertaken to manage for him at Venice, but, on the immediate object of his journey, expressing himself in a tone so light and jesting, as it would be difficult for those not versed in his character to conceive that he could ever bring himself, while under the influence of a passion so sincere, to assume. But such is ever the wantonness of the mocking spirit, from which nothing,—not even love,—remains sacred; and which, at last, for want of other food, turns upon himself. The same horror, too, of hypocrisy that led Lord Byron to exaggerate his own errors, led him also to disguise, under a seemingly heartless ridicule, all those natural and kindly qualities by which they were redeemed.

This letter from Padua concludes thus:—

"A journey in an Italian June is a conscription; and if I was not the most constant of men, I should now be swimming from the Lido, instead of smoking in the dust of Padua. Should there be letters from England, let them wait my return. And do look at my house and (not lands, but) waters, and scold;— and deal out the monies to Edgecombe [1] with an air of reluctance and a shake of the head—and put queer questions to him—and turn up your nose when he answers.

"Make my respect to the Consuless—and to the Chevalier—and to Scotin—and to all the counts and countesses of our acquaintance.

"And believe me ever

"Your disconsolate and affectionate, &c."

As a contrast to the strange levity of this letter, as well as in justice to the real earnestness of the passion, however censurable in all other respects, that now engrossed him, I shall here transcribe some stanzas which he wrote in the course of this journey to Romagna, and which, though already published, are not comprised in the regular collection of his works.

"River [2], that rollest by the ancient walls,
Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
Walks by thy brink, and there perchance recalls
A faint and fleeting memory of me," &c. &c. [3]

[1] A clerk of the English Consulate, whom he at this time employed to control his accounts.

[2] The Po.

[3] [For the remaining stanzas see Works, p. 571. edit. 1837.]

CHAPTER XXXIV.

1819.

FERRARA. — VISIT TO THE CERTOSA CEMETERY. — ANECDOTES. — BOLOGNA. — ILLNESS OF MADAME GUICCIOLI. — ARRIVAL AT RAVENNA. — LETTERS TO HOPPNER AND MURRAY. — RETURN TO BOLOGNA. — ALFIERI'S MIRRA. — LETTERS TO MURRAY CONCERNING DON JUAN. — SONNET TO THE PRINCE REGENT. — LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE BRITISH REVIEW.

On arriving at Bologna and receiving no further intelligence from the Contessa, he began to be of opinion, as we shall perceive in the annexed interesting letters, that he should act most prudently, for all parties, by returning to Venice.

LETTER 330. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Bologna, June 6. 1819.

"I am at length joined to Bologna, where I am settled like a sausage, and shall be broiled like one, if this weather continues. Will you thank Mengaldo on my part for the Ferrara acquaintance, which was a very agreeable one. I stayed two days at Ferrara, and was much pleased with the Count Mosti, and the little the shortness of the time permitted me to see of his family. I went to his conversazione, which is very far superior to any thing of the kind at Venice — the women almost all young — several pretty — and the men courteous and cleanly. The lady of the mansion, who is young, lately married, and with child, appeared very pretty by candlelight (I did not see her by day), pleasing in her manners, and very lady-like, or thorough-bred, as we call it in England, — a kind of thing which reminds one of a racer, an antelope, or an Italian greyhound. She seems very fond of her husband, who is amiable and accomplished; he has been in England two or three times, and is young. The sister, a Countess somebody — I forget what — (they are both Maffei by birth, and Veronese of course) — is a lady of more display; she sings and plays divinely; but I thought she was a d—d long time about it. Her likeness to Madame Flahaut[1] (Miss Mercer that was) is something quite extraordinary.

"I had but a bird's eye view of these people, and shall not probably see them again; but I am very much obliged to Mengaldo for letting me see them at all. Whenever I meet with any thing agreeable in this world, it surprises me so much, and pleases me so much (when my passions are not interested one way or the other), that I go on wondering for a week to come. I feel, too, in great admiration of the Cardinal Legate's red stockings.

"I found, too, such a pretty epitaph in the Certosa cemetery, or rather two: one was,

"'Martini Luigi
Implora pace;'

the other,

"'Lucrezia Picini
Implora eterna quiete.'

That was all; but it appears to me that these two and three words comprise and compress all that can be said on the subject, — and then, in Italian, they are absolute music. They contain doubt, hope, and humility; nothing can be more pathetic than the 'implora' and the modesty of the request; — they have had enough of life — they want nothing but rest — they implore it, and 'eterna quiete.' It is like a Greek inscription in some good old heathen 'City of the Dead.' Pray, if I am shovelled into the Lido churchyard in your time, let me have the 'implora pace,' and nothing else, for my epitaph.[2] I never met with any, ancient or modern, that pleased me a tenth part so much.

"In about a day or two after you receive this letter, I will thank you to desire Edgecombe to prepare for my return. I shall go back to Venice before I village on the Brenta. I shall stay but a few days in Bologna. I am just going out to see sights, but shall not present my introductory letters for a day or two, till I have run over again the place and pictures; nor perhaps at all, if I find that I have books and sights enough to do without the inhabitants. After that I shall return to Venice, where you may expect me about the eleventh, or perhaps sooner. Pray make my thanks acceptable to Mengaldo: my respects to the Consuless, and to Mr. Scott. I hope my daughter is well. "Ever yours, and truly.

[1] [The Honourable Margaret Mercer Elphinstone, now Baroness Keith. In 1817 she was married to Count Flahaut, and on the demise of her father, in 1823, she succeeded to the peerage.]

[2] ["Oh! may my shade behold no sculptur'd urns,
To mark the spot where earth to earth returns!
No lengthen'd scroll, no praise-encumber'd stone;
My epitaph shall be my name alone."
Hours of Idleness. See Works, p. 378.]

"P. S.—I went over the Ariosto MS. &c. &c. again at Ferrara, with the castle, and cell, and house, &c. &c.

"One of the Ferrarese asked me if I knew 'Lord Byron,' an acquaintance of his, *now* at Naples. I told him '*No!*' which was true both ways; for I knew not the impostor, and in the other, no one knows himself. He stared when told that I was 'the real Simon Pure.' Another asked me if I had *not translated* 'Tasso.' You see what *fame* is! how *accurate!* how *boundless!* I don't know how others feel, but I am always the lighter and the better looked on when I have got rid of mine; it sits on me like armour on the Lord Mayor's champion; and I got rid of all the husk of literature, and the attendant babble, by answering, that I had not translated Tasso, but a namesake had; and by the blessing of Heaven, I looked so little like a poet, that every body believed me."

LETTER 331. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Bologna, June 7. 1819.

"Tell Mr. Hobhouse that I wrote to him a few days ago from Ferrara. It will therefore be idle in him or you to wait for any further answers or returns of proofs from Venice, as I have directed that no English letters be sent after me. The publication can be proceeded in without, and I am already sick of your remarks, to which I think not the least attention ought to be paid.

"Tell Mr. Hobhouse that, since I wrote to him, I had availed myself of my Ferrara letters, and found the society much younger and better there than at Venice. I am very much pleased with the little the shortness of my stay permitted me to see of the Gonfaloniere Count Mosti, and his family and friends in general.

"I have been picture-gazing this morning at the famous Domenichino and Guido, both of which are superlative. I afterwards went to the beautiful cemetery of Bologna, beyond the walls, and found, besides the superb burial-ground, an original of a Custode, who reminded me of the grave-digger in Hamlet. He has a collection of capuchins' skulls, labelled on the forehead, and taking down one of them, said, 'This was Brother Desiderio Berro, who died at forty — one of my best friends. I begged his head of his brethren after his decease, and they gave it me. I put it in lime, and then boiled it. Here it is, teeth and all, in excellent preservation. He was the merriest, cleverest fellow I ever knew. Wherever he went, he brought joy; and whenever any one was melancholy, the sight of him was enough to make him cheerful again. He walked so actively, you might have taken him for a dancer — he joked — he laughed — oh! he was such a Frate as I never saw before, nor ever shall again!'

"He told me that he had himself planted all the cypresses in the cemetery; that he had the greatest attachment to them and to his dead people; that since 1801 they had buried fifty-three thousand persons. In showing some older monuments, there was that of a Roman girl of twenty, with a bust by Bernini. She was a princess Bartorini, dead two centuries ago: he said that, on opening her grave, they had found her hair complete, and 'as yellow as gold.' Some of the epitaphs at Ferrara pleased me more than the more splendid monuments at Bologna; for instance:—

"'Martini Luigi
Implora pace.'

"'Lucrezia Picini
Implora eterna quiete.'

Can any thing be more full of pathos? Those few words say all that can be said or sought: the dead had had enough of life; all they wanted was rest, and this they *implore!* There is all the helplessness, and humble hope, and deathlike prayer, that can arise from the grave — 'implora pace.'[1] I hope, whoever may survive me, and shall see me put in the foreigners' burying-ground at the Lido, within the fortress by the Adriatic, will see those two words, and no more, put over me. I trust they won't think of 'pickling, and bringing me home to Clod or Blunderbuss Hall.'[2] I am sure my bones would not rest in an English grave, or my clay mix with the earth of that country. I believe the thought would drive me mad on my deathbed, could I suppose that any of my friends would be base enough to convey my carcass back to your soil. I would not even feed your worms, if I could help it.

"So, as Shakspeare says of Mowbray, the banished Duke of Norfolk, who died at

[1] Though Lord Byron, like most other persons, in writing to different friends, was sometimes led to repeat the same circumstances and thoughts, there is, from the ever ready fertility of his mind, much less of such repetition in his correspondence than in that, perhaps, of any other multifarious letter writer; and, in the instance before us, where the same facts and reflections are, for the second time, introduced, it is with such new touches, both of thought and expression, as render them, even a second time, interesting; — what is wanting in the novelty of the matter being made up by the new aspect given to it.

[2] ["If you should get a quietus, you may command me entirely. I'll get you a snug lying in the Abbey here; or pickle you, and send you over to Blunderbuss Hall." — *Rivals*, act v. sc. 2.]

Venice (see Richard II.), that he, after fighting

"'Against black Pagans, Turks, and Saracens,
And toiled with works of war, retired himself
To Italy, and there, at *Venice*, gave
His body to that *pleasant* country's earth,
And his pure soul unto his captain, Christ,
Under whose colours he had fought so long.'

"Before I left Venice, I had returned to you your late, and Mr. Hobhouse's sheets of Juan. Don't wait for further answers from me, but address yours to Venice, as usual. I know nothing of my own movements; I may return there in a few days, or not for some time. All this depends on circumstances. I left Mr. Hoppner very well, as well as his son and Mrs. Hoppner. My daughter Allegra was well too, and is growing pretty; her hair is growing darker, and her eyes are blue. Her temper and her ways, Mr. Hoppner says, are like mine, as well as her features: she will make, in that case, a manageable young lady.

"I have never heard any thing of Ada, the little Electra of my Mycenæ. But there will come a day of reckoning, even if I should not live to see it.[1] What a long letter I have scribbled! "Yours, &c.

"P. S. — Here, as in Greece, they strew flowers on the tombs. I saw a quantity of rose-leaves, and entire roses, scattered over the graves at Ferrara. It has the most pleasing effect you can imagine."

While he was thus lingering irresolute at Bologna, the Countess Guiccioli had been attacked with an intermittent fever, the violence of which, combining with the absence of a confidential person to whom she had been in the habit of intrusting her letters, prevented her from communicating with him. At length, anxious to spare him the disappointment of finding her so ill on his arrival, she had begun a letter, requesting that he would remain at Bologna till the visit to which she looked forward should bring her there also; and was in the act of writing, when a friend came in to announce the arrival of an English lord in Ravenna. She could not doubt for an instant that it was her noble friend; and he had, in fact, notwithstanding his declaration to Mr. Hoppner that it was his intention to return to Venice immediately, wholly altered this resolution before the letter announcing it was despatched, — the following words being written on the outside cover: — "I am just setting off for Ravenna, June 8. 1819. — I changed my mind this morning, and decided to go on."

The reader, however, shall have Madame Guiccioli's own account of these events, which, fortunately for the interests of my narration, I am enabled to communicate.

"On my departure from Venice, he had promised to come and see me at Ravenna. Dante's tomb, the classical pine wood[2], the relics of antiquity which are to be found in that place, afforded a sufficient pretext for me to invite him to come, and for him to accept my invitation. He came, in fact, in the month of June, arriving at Ravenna on the day of the festival of the Corpus Domini; while I, attacked by a consumptive complaint, which had its origin from the moment of my quitting Venice, appeared on the point of death. The arrival of a distinguished foreigner at Ravenna, a town so remote from the routes ordinarily followed by travellers, was an event which gave rise to a good deal of conversation. His motives for such a visit became the subject of discussion, and these he himself afterwards involuntarily divulged; for having made some inquiries with a view to paying me a visit, and being told that it was unlikely that he would ever see me again, as I was at the point of death, he replied, if such were the case, he hoped that he should die also; which circumstance, being repeated, revealed the object of his journey. Count Guiccioli, having been acquainted with Lord Byron at Venice, went to visit him now, and in the

[1] There were, in the former edition, both here and in a subsequent letter, some passages reflecting upon the late Sir Samuel Romilly, which, in my anxiety to lay open the workings of Lord Byron's mind upon a subject in which so much of his happiness and character were involved, I had been induced to retain, though aware of the erroneous impression under which they were written; — the evident morbidness of the feeling that dictated the attack, and the high, stainless reputation of the person assailed, being sufficient, I thought, to neutralise any ill effects such reflections might otherwise have produced. As I find it, however, to be the opinion of all those whose opinions I most respect, that, even with these antidotes, such an attack upon such a man ought not to be left on record, I willingly expunge all trace of it from these pages.

[2] "Tal qual di ramo in ramo si raccoglie
Per la pineta in sul lito di Chiassi,
Quando Eolo Scirocco fuor discioglie."
DANTE: *Purg.* canto xxviii.

["——"Even as from branch to branch,
Along the piny forests on the shore
Of Chiassi, rolls the gathering melody,
When Eolus hath from his cavern loos'd
The dripping south." CARY.]

Dante himself (says Mr. Cary, in one of the notes on his admirable translation of this poet) "perhaps wandered in this wood during his abode with Guido Novello da Polenta."

hope that his presence might amuse, and be of some use to me in the state in which I then found myself, invited him to call upon me. He came the day following. It is impossible to describe the anxiety he showed, — the delicate attentions that he paid me. For a long time he had perpetually medical books in his hands; and not trusting my physicians, he obtained permission from Count Guiccioli to send for a very clever physician, a friend of his, in whom he placed great confidence. The attentions of Professor Aglietti (for so this celebrated Italian was called), together with tranquillity, and the inexpressible happiness which I experienced in Lord Byron's society, had so good an effect on my health, that only two months afterwards I was able to accompany my husband in a tour he was obliged to make to visit his various estates." [1]

LETTER 332. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, June 20. 1819.

"I wrote to you from Padua, and from Bologna, and since from Ravenna. I find my situation very agreeable, but want my horses very much, there being good riding in the environs. I can fix no time for my return to Venice — it may be soon or late — or not at all — it all depends on the Donna, whom I found very seriously in *bed* with a cough and spitting of blood, &c., all of which has subsided. I found all the people here firmly persuaded that she would never recover; — they were mistaken, however.

"My letters were useful as far as I employed them; and I like both the place and people, though I don't trouble the latter more than I can help. *She* manages very well — but if I come away with a stiletto in my gizzard some fine afternoon, I shall not be astonished. I can't make *him* out at all — he visits me frequently, and takes me out (like Whittington, the Lord Mayor) in a coach and *six* horses. The fact appears to be, that he is completely *governed* by her — for that matter, so am I.[2] The people here don't know what to make of us, as he had the character of jealousy with all his wives — this is the third. He is the richest of the Ravennese, by their own account, but is not popular among them. Now do, pray, send off Augustine, and carriage and cattle, to Bologna, without fail or delay, or I shall lose my remaining shred of senses. Don't forget this. My coming, going, and every thing, depend upon HER entirely, just as Mrs. Hoppner (to whom I remit my reverences) said in the true spirit of female prophecy.

"You are but a shabby fellow not to have written before.

"And I am truly yours, &c."

LETTER 333. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, June 29. 1819.

"The letters have been forwarded from Venice, but I trust that you will not have waited for further alterations — I will make none.

"I have no time to return you the proofs — publish without them. I am glad you think the poesy good; and as to 'thinking of the effect,' think *you* of the sale, and leave me to pluck the porcupines who may point their quills at you.

"I have been here (at Ravenna) these

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[1] "Partendo io da Venezia egli promise di venir a vedermi a Ravenna. La Tomba di Dante, il classico bosco di pini, gli avvanzi di antichità che a Ravenna si trovano davano a me ragioni plausibili per invitarlo a venire, ed a lui per accettare l'invito. Egli venne difatti nel mese Guigno, e giunse a Ravenna nel giorno della Solennità del Corpus Domini, mentre io attaccata da una malattia de consunzione ch' ebbe principio dalla mia partenza da Venezia ero vicina a morire. L'arrivo in Ravenna d'un forestiero distinto, in un paese così lontano dalle strade che ordinariamente tengono i viaggiatori era un avvenimento del quale molto si parlava, indagandosene i motivi, che involontariamente poi egli feci conoscere. Perchè avendo egli domandato di me per venire a vedermi ed essendogli risposto 'che non potrebbe vedermi più perchè ero vicina a morire'—egli rispose che in quel caso voleva morire egli pure; la qual cosa essendosi poi ripetata si conobbe così l'oggetto del suo viaggio.

"Il Conte Guiccioli visitò Lord Byron, essendolo conosciuto in Venezia, e nella speranza che la di lui compagnia potesse distrarmi ed essermi di qualche giovamento nello stato in cui mi trovavo egli lo invitò di venire a visitarmi. Il giorno appresso egli venne. Non si potrebbero descrivere le cure, i pensieri delicati, quanto egli fece per me. Per molto tempo egli non ebbe per le mani che dei Libri di Medicina; e poco confidandosi nel miei medici ottenne dal Conte Guiccioli il permeso di far venire un valente medico di lui amico nel quale egli aveva molta confidenza. Le cure del Professore Aglietti (così si chiama questo distinto Italiano) la tranquillità anzi la felicità inesprimibile che mi cagionava la presenza di Lord Byron migliorarono così rapidamente la mia salute che entro lo spazio di due mesi potei seguire mio marito in un giro che egli doveva fare per le sue terre." — *MS.*

[2] That this task of "governing" him was one of more ease than, from the ordinary view of his character, might be concluded, I have more than once, in these pages, expressed my opinion, and shall here quote, in corroboration of it, the remark of his own servant (founded on an observation of more than twenty years), in speaking of his master's matrimonial fate: — "It is very odd, but I never yet knew a lady that could not manage my Lord, *except* my Lady."

"More knowledge," says Johnson, "may be gained of a man's real character by a short conversation with one of his servants than from the most formal and studied narrative."

four weeks, having left Venice a month ago; — I came to see my 'Amica,' the Countess Guiccioli, who has been, and still continues, very unwell. * * She is only in her seventeenth, but not of a strong constitution. She has a perpetual cough and an intermittent fever, but bears up most *gallantly* in every sense of the word. Her husband (this is his third wife) is the richest noble of Ravenna, and almost of Romagna; he is also *not* the youngest, being upwards of threescore, but in good preservation. All this will appear strange to you, who do not understand the meridian morality, nor our way of life in such respects, and I cannot at present expound the difference;—but you would find it much the same in these parts. At Faenza there is Lord * * * * with an opera girl; and at the inn in the same town is a Neapolitan Prince, who serves the wife of the Gonfaloniere of that city. I am on duty here — so you see 'Così fan tutti e tutte.'

"I have my horses here, *saddle* as well as carriage, and ride or drive every day in the forest, the *Pineta*, the scene of Boccaccio's novel, and Dryden's fable of Honoria, &c. &c.[1]; and I see my Dama every day; but I feel seriously uneasy about her health, which seems very precarious. In losing her, I should lose a being who has run great risks on my account, and whom I have every reason to love — but I must not think this possible. I do not know what I *should* do if she died, but I ought to blow my brains out — and I hope that I should. Her husband is a very polite personage, but I wish he would not carry me out in his coach and six, like Whittington and his cat.

"You ask me if I mean to continue D. J., &c. How should I know? What encouragement do you give me, all of you, with your nonsensical prudery? publish the two Cantos, and then you will see. I desired Mr. Kinnaird to speak to you on a little matter of business; either he has not spoken, or you have not answered. You are a pretty pair, but I will be even with you both. I perceive that Mr. Hobhouse has been challenged by Major Cartwright — Is the Major so 'cunning of fence?' — why did not they fight? — they ought.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 334. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, July 2. 1819.

"Thanks for your letter and for Madame's. I will answer it directly. Will you recollect whether I did not consign to you one or two receipts of Madame Mocenigo's for house-rent — (I am not sure of this, but think I did — if not, they will be in my drawers) — and will you desire Mr. Dorville[2] to have the goodness to see if Edgecombe has *receipts* to all payments *hitherto* made by him on my account, and that there are *no debts* at Venice? On your answer, I shall send order of further remittance to carry on my household expenses, as my present return to Venice is very problematical; and it may happen — but I can say nothing positive — every thing with me being indecisive and undecided, except the disgust which Venice excites when fairly compared with any other city in this part of Italy. When I say *Venice*, I mean the *Venetians* — the city itself is superb as its history — but the people are what I never thought them till they taught me to think so.

"The best way will be to leave Allegra with Antonio's spouse till I can decide something about her and myself — but I thought that you would have had an answer from Mrs. V——r.[3] You have had bore enough with me and mine already.

"I greatly fear that the Guiccioli is going into a consumption, to which her constitution tends. Thus it is with every thing and every body for whom I feel any thing like a real attachment; — 'War, death, or discord, doth lay siege to them.' I never even could keep alive a dog that I liked or that liked me. Her symptoms are obstinate cough of the lungs, and occasional fever, &c. &c., and there are latent causes of an eruption in the skin, which she foolishly repelled into the system two years ago: but I have made them send her case to Aglietti; and have begged

[1] ["Sweet hour of twilight! — in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
Evergreen forest! which Boccacio's lore
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!"
Don Juan, c. iii. st. 105.]

[2] The Vice-Consul of Mr. Hoppner.

[3] An English widow lady, of considerable property in the north of England, who, having seen the little Allegra at Mr. Hoppner's, took an interest in the poor child's fate, and having no family of her own, offered to adopt and provide for this little girl, if Lord Byron would consent to renounce all claim to her. At first he seemed not disinclined to enter into her views — so far, at least, as giving permission that she should take the child with her to England and educate it; but the entire surrender of his paternal authority he would by no means consent to. The proposed arrangement accordingly was never carried into effect.

him to come — if only for a day or two — to consult upon her state.

"If it would not bore Mr. Dorville, I wish he would keep an eye on E———— and on my other ragamuffins. I might have more to say, but I am absorbed about La Gui. and her illness. I cannot tell you the effect it has upon me.

"The horses came, &c. &c. and I have been galloping through the pine forest daily.

"Believe me, &c.

"P. S. — My benediction on Mrs. Hoppner, a pleasant journey among the Bernese tyrants, and safe return. You ought to bring back a Platonic Bernese for my reformation. If any thing happens to my present Amica, I have done with the passion for ever — it is my *last* love. As to libertinism, I have sickened myself of that, as was natural in the way I went on, and I have at least derived that advantage from vice, to *love* in the better sense of the word. *This* will be my last adventure — I can hope no more to inspire attachment, and I trust never again to feel it."

The impression which, I think, cannot but be entertained, from some passages of these letters, of the real fervour and sincerity of his attachment to Madame Guiccioli[1], would be still further confirmed by the perusal of his letters to that lady herself, both from Venice and during his present stay at Ravenna — all bearing, throughout, the true marks both of affection and passion. Such effusions, however, are but little suited to the general eye. It is the tendency of all strong feeling, from dwelling constantly on the same idea, to be monotonous; and those often-repeated vows and verbal endearments, which make the charm of true love-letters to the parties concerned in them, must for ever render even the best of them cloying to others. Those of Lord Byron to Madame Guiccioli, which are for the most part in Italian, and written with a degree of ease and correctness attained rarely by foreigners, refer chiefly to the difficulties thrown in the way of their meetings, — not so much by the husband himself, who appears to have liked and courted Lord Byron's society, as by the watchfulness of other relatives, and the apprehension felt by themselves lest their intimacy should give uneasiness to the father of the lady, Count Gamba, a gentleman to whose good nature and amiableness of character all who know him bear testimony.

In the near approaching departure of the young Countess for Bologna, Lord Byron foresaw a risk of their being again separated; and under the impatience of this prospect, though through the whole of his preceding letters the fear of committing her by any imprudence seems to have been his ruling thought, he now, with that wilfulness of the moment which has so often sealed the destiny of years, proposed that she should, at once, abandon her husband and fly with him: — "c'è uno solo rimedio efficace," he says, — "cioè d'andar via insieme." To an Italian wife, almost every thing but this is permissible. The same system which so indulgently allows her a friend, as one of the regular appendages of her matrimonial establishment, takes care also to guard against all unseemly consequences of this privilege; and in return for such convenient facilities of wrong exacts rigidly an observance of all the appearances of right. Accordingly, the open step of deserting the husband for the lover instead of being considered, as in England, but a sign and sequel of transgression, takes rank, in Italian morality, as the main transgression itself; and being an offence, too, rendered wholly unnecessary by the latitude otherwise enjoyed, becomes, from its rare occurrence, no less monstrous than odious.

The proposition, therefore, of her noble friend seemed to the young Contessa little less than sacrilege, and the agitation of her mind, between the horrors of such a step, and her eager readiness to give up all and every thing for him she adored, was depicted most strongly in her answer to the proposal. In a subsequent letter, too, the romantic girl even proposed, as a means of escaping the ignominy of an elopement, that she should, like another Juliet, "pass for dead," — assuring him that there were many easy ways of effecting such a deception.

[1] "During my illness," says Madame Guiccioli, in her recollections of this period, "he was for ever near me, paying me the most amiable attentions, and when I became convalescent he was constantly at my side. In society, at the theatre, riding, walking, he never was absent from me. Being deprived at that time of his books, his horses, and all that occupied him at Venice, I begged him to gratify me by writing something on the subject of Dante, and, with his usual facility and rapidity, he composed his 'Prophecy.'" — "Durante la mia malattia L. B. era sempre presso di me, prestandomi le più sensibili cure, e quando passai allo stato di convalescenza egli era sempre al mio fianco; — e in società, e al teatro, e cavalcando, e passeggiando egli non si allontanava mai da me. In quel' epoca essendo egli privo de' suoi libri, e de' suoi cavalli, e di tuttociò che lo occupava in Venezia io lo pregai di volersi occupare per me scrivendo qualche cosa sul Dante; ed egli colla usata sua facilità e rapidità scrisse la sua Profezia."

LETTER 335. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, August 1. 1819.

[Address your Answer to Venice, however.]

"Don't be alarmed. You will see me defend myself gaily — that is, if I happen to be in spirits; and by *spirits*, I don't mean your meaning of the word, but the spirit of a bulldog when pinched, or a bull when pinned; it is then that they make best sport; and as my sensations under an attack are probably a happy compound of the united energies of these amiable animals, you may perhaps see what Marrall calls 'rare sport,' and some good tossing and goring, in the course of the controversy. But I must be in the right cue first, and I doubt I am almost too far off to be in a sufficient fury for the purpose. And then I have effeminated and enervated myself with love and the summer in these last two months.

"I wrote to Mr. Hobhouse the other day, and foretold that Juan would either fall entirely or succeed completely; there will be no medium. Appearances are not favourable; but as you write the day after publication, it can hardly be decided what opinion will predominate. You seem in a fright, and doubtless with cause. Come what may, I never will flatter the million's canting in any shape. Circumstances may or may not have placed me at times in a situation to lead the public opinion, but the public opinion never led, nor ever shall lead, me. I will not sit 'on a degraded throne;' so pray put Messrs. * * [Southey], or * * [Sotheby], or Tom Moore, or * * * [Horace Twiss] upon it, they will all of them be transported with their coronation.

"P. S. — The Countess Guiccioli is much better than she was. I sent you, before leaving Venice, the real original sketch which gave rise to the 'Vampire,' &c. Did you get it?"

This letter was, of course (like most of those he addressed to England at this time), intended to be shown; and having been, among others, permitted to see it, I took occasion, in my very next communication to Lord Byron, to twit him a little with the passage in it relating to myself, — the only one, as far as I can learn, that ever fell from my noble friend's pen during our intimacy, in which he has spoken of me otherwise than in terms of kindness and the most undeserved praise. Transcribing his own words, as well as I could recollect them, at the top of my letter, I added, underneath, "Is *this* the way you speak of your friends?" Not long after, too, when visiting him at Venice, I remember making the same harmless little sneer a subject of raillery with him; but he declared boldly that he had no recollection of having ever written such words, and that, if they existed, "he must have been half asleep when he wrote them.

I have mentioned the circumstance merely for the purpose of remarking, that with a sensibility vulnerable at so many points as his was, and acted upon by an imagination so long practised in self-tormenting, it is only wonderful that, thinking constantly, as his letters prove him to have been, of distant friends, and receiving from few or none equal proofs of thoughtfulness in return, he should not more frequently have broken out into such sallies against the absent and "unreplying." For myself, I can only say that, from the moment I began to unravel his character, the most slighting and even acrimonious expressions that I could have heard he had, in a fit of spleen, uttered against me, would have no more altered my opinion of his disposition, nor disturbed my affection for him, than the momentary clouding over of a bright sky could leave an impression on the mind of gloom, after its shadow had passed away.

LETTER 336. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, August 9. 1819.

"Talking of blunders reminds me of Ireland — Ireland of Moore. What is this I see in Galignani about 'Bermuda — agent — deputy — appeal — attachment,' &c.? What is the matter? Is it any thing in which his friends can be of use to him? Pray inform me.

"Of Don Juan I hear nothing further from *you;* but the papers don't seem so fierce as the letter you sent me seemed to anticipate, by their extracts at least in Galignani's Messenger. I never saw such a set of fellows as you are! And then the pains taken to exculpate the modest publisher — he remonstrated, forsooth! I will write a preface that *shall* exculpate *you* and * * * [Hobhouse], &c. completely, on that point; but, at the same time, I will cut you up, and you in particular, like gourds. You have no more soul than the Count de Caylus, (who assured his friends, on his death-bed, that he had none, and that *he* must know better than they whether he had one or no,) and no more blood than a water-melon! And I see there hath been asterisks, and what Perry used to call 'domned cutting and slashing' — but, never mind.

"I write in haste. To-morrow I set off for Bologna. I write to you with thunder, lightning, &c., and all the winds of heaven

whistling through my hair, and the racket of preparation to boot. 'My mistress dear,' who hath 'fed my heart upon smiles and wine'[1] for the last two months, set off for Bologna with her husband this morning, and it seems that I follow him at three to-morrow morning. I cannot tell how our romance will end, but it hath gone on hitherto most erotically. Such perils and escapes! Juan's are as child's play in comparison. The fools think that all my *poeshie* is always allusive to my *own* adventures: I have had at one time or another better and more extraordinary and perilous and pleasant than these, every day of the week, if I might tell them; but that must never be.

"I hope Mrs. M. has accouched.

"Yours ever."

LETTER 337. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Bologna, August 12. 1819.

"I do not know how far I may be able to reply to your letter, for I am not very well to-day. Last night I went to the representation of Alfieri's Mirra, the two last acts of which threw me into convulsions. I do not mean by that word a lady's hysterics, but the agony of reluctant tears, and the choking shudder, which I do not often undergo for fiction. This is but the second time for any thing under reality; the first was on seeing Kean's Sir Giles Overreach. The worst was, that the 'Dama,' in whose box I was, went off in the same way, I really believe more from fright than any other sympathy — at least with the players: but she has been ill, and I have been ill, and we are all languid and pathetic this morning, with great expenditure of sal volatile.[2] But, to return to your letter of the 23d of July.

"You are right, Gifford is right, Crabbe is right, Hobhouse is right — you are all right, and I am all wrong; but do, pray, let me have that pleasure. Cut me up root and branch; quarter me in the Quarterly; send round my 'disjecti membra poetæ,' like those of the Levite's concubine; make me, if you will, a spectacle to men and angels; but don't ask me to alter, for I won't: — I am obstinate and lazy — and there's the truth.

"But, nevertheless, I will answer your friend Palgrave, who objects to the quick succession of fun and gravity, as if in that case the gravity did not (in intention, at least) heighten the fun. His metaphor is, that 'we are never scorched and drenched at the same time.' Blessings on his experience! Ask him these questions about 'scorching and drenching.' Did he never play at cricket, or walk a mile in hot weather? Did he never spill a dish of tea over himself in handing the cup to his charmer, to the great shame of his nankeen breeches? Did he never swim in the sea at noonday with the sun in his eyes and on his head, which all the foam of ocean could not cool? Did he never draw his foot out of too hot water, d—ning his eyes and his valet's? Did he never tumble into a river or lake, fishing, and sit in his wet clothes in the boat, or on the bank, afterwards 'scorched and drenched,' like a true sportsman? 'Oh for breath to utter!' — but make him my compliments; he is a clever fellow for all that — a very clever fellow.

"You ask me for the plan of Donny Johnny: I *have* no plan; I *had* no plan; but I had or have materials; though if, like

[1] ["When in death I shall calm recline,
O bear my heart to my mistress dear;
Tell her it lived upon smiles and wine
Of the brightest hue, while it linger'd here."
Irish Melodies.]

[2] The "Dama," in whose company he witnessed this representation, thus describes its effect upon him: — "The play was that of Mirra; the actors, and particularly the actress* who performed the part of Mirra, seconded with much success the intentions of our great dramatist. Lord Byron took a strong interest in the representation, and it was evident that he was deeply affected. At length there came a point of the performance at which he could no longer restrain his emotions: — he burst into a flood of tears, and, his sobs preventing him from remaining any longer in the box, he rose and left the theatre. — I saw him similarly affected another time during a representation of Alfieri's 'Philip,' at Ravenna." — "Gli attori, e specialmente l' attrice che rappresentava Mirra secondava assai bene la mente del nostro grande tragico. L. B. prece molto interesse alla rappresentazione, e si conosceva che era molto commosso. Venne un punto poi della tragedia in cui non potè più frenare la sua emozione, — diede in un diretto pianto e i singhiozzi gl' impedirono di più restare nel palco; onde si levò, e partì dal teatro. In uno stato simile lo viddi un altra volta a Ravenna ad una rappresentazione del Filippo d'Alfieri."

* ["Went to see Mirra performed. I have seldom seen a tragedy where the distress is more affecting. The actress who played Mirra did it to the life: her first entrance told the whole story of the play; and the part is so managed, as to excite pity and sympathy for Mirra, in spite of the odious passion of which she is the victim. If terror and pity be the objects of tragedy, the part is admirably contrived to excite both these feelings in the highest degree; for, while you shudder at the terrible workings and fearful energy of her passion, the struggles of her own native innocence of mind and the horror with which she regards herself make the strongest appeal to your compassion." — MATTHEWS: *Diary of an Invalid*, p. 282. ed. 1835.]

Tony Lumpkin, 'I am to be snubbed so when I am in spirits,' the poem will be naught, and the poet turn serious again. If it don't take, I will leave it off where it is, with all due respect to the public; but if continued, it must be in my own way. You might as well make Hamlet (or Diggory)[1] 'act mad' in a strait waistcoat as trammel my buffoonery, if I am to be a buffoon; their gestures and my thoughts would only be pitiably absurd and ludicrously constrained. Why, man, the soul of such writing is its licence; at least the *liberty* of that *licence*, if one likes — *not* that one should abuse it. It is like Trial by Jury and Peerage and the Habeas Corpus — a very fine thing, but chiefly in the *reversion;* because no one wishes to be tried for the mere pleasure of proving his possession of the privilege.

"But a truce with these reflections. You are too earnest and eager about a work never intended to be serious. Do you suppose that I could have any intention but to giggle and make giggle? — a playful satire, with as little poetry as could be helped, was what I meant. And as to the indecency, do, pray, read in Boswell what *Johnson*, the sullen moralist, says of *Prior* and Paulo Purgante.[2]

"Will you get a favour done for me? *You* can, by your government friends, Croker, Canning, or my old schoolfellow Peel, and I can't. Here it is. Will you ask them to appoint (*without salary or emolument*) a noble Italian (whom I will name afterwards) consul or vice-consul for Ravenna? He is a man of very large property, — noble, too; but he wishes to have a British protection, in case of changes. Ravenna is near the sea. He wants *no emolument* whatever. That his office might be useful, I know; as I lately sent off from Ravenna to Trieste a poor devil of an English sailor, who had remained there sick, sorry, and pennyless (having been set ashore in 1814), from the want of any accredited agent able or willing to help him homewards. Will you get this done? If you do, I will then send his name and condition, subject, of course, to rejection, if *not* approved when known.

"I know that in the Levant you make consuls and vice-consuls, perpetually, of foreigners. This man is a patrician, and has twelve thousand a year. His motive is a British protection in case of new invasions. Don't you think Croker would do it for us? To be sure, my *interest* is rare!! but, perhaps, a brother wit in the Tory line might do a good turn at the request of so harmless and long absent a Whig, particularly as there is no *salary* or *burden* of any sort to be annexed to the office.

"I can assure you, I should look upon it as a great obligation; but, alas! that very circumstance may, very probably, operate to the contrary — indeed, it ought; but I have, at least, been an honest and an open enemy. Amongst your many splendid government connections, could not you, think you, get our Bibulus made a Consul? or make me one, that I may make him my Vice. You may be assured that, in case of accidents in Italy, he would be no feeble adjunct — as you would think if you knew his property.

"What is all this about Tom Moore? but why do I ask? since the state of my own affairs would not permit me to be of use to him, though they are greatly improved since 1816, and may, with some more luck and a little prudence, become quite clear. It seems his claimants are *American* merchants? *There* goes *Nemesis!* Moore abused America. It is always thus in the long run: — Time, the Avenger. You have seen every trampler down, in turn, from Buonaparte to the simplest individuals. You saw how some were avenged even upon my insignificance, and how in turn * * * [Romilly] paid for his atrocity. It is an odd world; but the watch has its mainspring, after all.

"So the Prince has been repealing Lord Edward Fitzgerald's forfeiture?[3] *Ecco un' sonetto!*

"To be the father of the fatherless,
To stretch the hand from the throne's height, and raise
His offspring, who expired in other days
To make thy sire's sway by a kingdom less, —
This is to be a monarch, and repress
Envy into unutterable praise.

[1] [In the farce of "All the World's a Stage."]

[2] ["I mentioned Lord Hailes's censure of Prior, in his preface to a Collection of Sacred Poems, where he mentions 'those impure tales which will be the eternal opprobrium of their author.'— JOHNSON: 'Sir, Lord Hailes has forgot.' There is nothing in Prior that will excite to lewdness. If Lord Hailes thinks there is, he must be more combustible than other people!' I instanced the tale of Paulo Purganti.—JOHNSON: 'Sir, there is nothing there. * * No, sir, Prior is a lady's book: no lady is ashamed to have it standing in her library.'" — *Boswell*, vol. vii. p. 10. ed. 1835.]

[3] [Lord Edward Fitzgerald, fifth son of the first Duke of Leinster. He died in 1798, of wounds received in resisting an arrest upon a charge of high treason. He had married Pamela, the adopted daughter of Madame de Genlis; who, according to Mr. Moore's Life of Lord Edward, was in fact that lady's own daughter by the Duke of Orleans. —*Egalité.*]

Dismiss thy guard, and trust thee to such traits,
For who would lift a hand, except to bless?
Were it not easy, Sir, and is't not sweet
To make thyself beloved? and to be
Omnipotent by Mercy's means? for thus
Thy sovereignty would grow but more complete,
A despot thou, and yet thy people free,
And by the heart, not hand, enslaving us.

"There, you dogs! there's a sonnet for you: you won't have such as that in a hurry from Mr. Fitzgerald. You may publish it with my name, an' ye wool. He deserves all praise, bad and good; it was a very noble piece of principality. Would you like an epigram — a translation?

"If for silver, or for gold,
You could melt ten thousand pimples
Into half a dozen dimples,
Then your face we might behold,
Looking, doubtless, much more smugly,
Yet ev'n *then* 'twould be d—d ugly.

"This was written on some Frenchwoman, by Rulhières, I believe. And so good morrow to you, Master Lieutenant.

"Yours."

LETTER 338. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Bologna, August 23. 1819.

"I send you a letter to Roberts, signed Wortley Clutterbuck, which you may publish in what form you please, in answer to his article. I have had many proofs of men's absurdity, but he beats all in folly. Why, the wolf in sheep's clothing has tumbled into the very trap! We'll strip him. The letter is written in great haste, and amidst a thousand vexations. Your letter only came yesterday, so that there is no time to polish: the post goes out to-morrow. The date is 'Little Piddlington.' Let Hobhouse correct the press; he knows and can read the handwriting. Continue to keep the *anonymous* about 'Juan;' it helps us to fight against overwhelming numbers. I have a thousand distractions at present; so excuse haste, and wonder I can act or write at all. Answer by post, as usual.

"Yours.

"P. S.—If I had had time, and been quieter and nearer, I would have cut him to hash; but as it is, you can judge for yourselves."

The letter to the Reviewer, here mentioned, had its origin in rather an amusing circumstance. In the first canto of Don Juan appeared the following passage:—

"For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish,
I've bribed My Grandmother's Review, — the British!

"I sent it in a letter to the editor,
Who thank'd me duly by return of post—
I'm for a handsome article his creditor;
Yet if my gentle Muse he please to roast,
And break a promise after having made it her,
Denying the receipt of what it cost,
And smear his page with gall instead of honey,
All I can say is — that he had the money."

On the appearance of the poem, the learned editor of the Review in question allowed himself to be decoyed into the ineffable absurdity of taking the charge as serious, and, in his succeeding number, came forth with an indignant contradiction of it.[1] To this tempting subject the letter, written so hastily off at Bologna, related; but, though printed for Mr. Murray, in a pamphlet, consisting of twenty-three pages, it was never published by him. Being valuable, however, as one of the best specimens we have of Lord Byron's simple and thoroughly English prose, it has been preserved in the recent editions of his works.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1819.

MODE OF LIFE AT BOLOGNA. — ANECDOTES. — RETURN WITH MADAME GUICCIOLI TO LA MIRA. — MR. MOORE'S REMINISCENCES OF HIS VISIT TO LORD BYRON. — HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE. — HIS PORTRAIT BY THE COUNTESS ALBRIZZI — MR. HOPPNER'S ACCOUNT OF HIS HABITS AND MODE OF LIFE AT VENICE.

Towards the latter end of August, Count Guiccioli, accompanied by his lady, went for a short time to visit some of his Romagnese estates, while Lord Byron remained at Bologna alone. And here, with a heart softened and excited by the new feeling that had taken possession of him, he appears to have given himself up, during this interval of solitude, to a train of melancholy and impassioned thought, such as, for a time, brought back all the romance of his youthful days.

[1] ["No misdemeanor," say the reviewers," appears to us in so detestable a light as the acceptance of a present by an editor of a Review, as the condition of praising an author; and yet the miserable man (for miserable he is, as having a soul of which he cannot get rid), who has given birth to this pestilent poem, has not scrupled to lay this to the charge of the British Review; and that not by insinuation, but has actually stated himself to have sent money in a letter to the editor of this journal, who acknowledged the receipt of the same by a letter in return, with thanks. We do utterly deny that there is one word of truth, or the semblance of truth, as far as regards this Review or its Editor, in the assertions made in the stanzas above referred to."]

That spring of natural tenderness within his soul, which neither the world's efforts nor his own had been able to chill or choke up, was now, with something of its first freshness, set flowing once more. He again knew what it was to love and be loved,—too late, it is true, for happiness, and too wrongly for peace, but with devotion enough, on the part of the woman, to satisfy even his thirst for affection, and with a sad earnestness, on his own, a foreboding fidelity, which made him cling but the more passionately to this attachment from feeling that it would be his last.

A circumstance which he himself used to mention as having occurred at this period will show how overpowering, at times, was the rush or melancholy over his heart. It was his fancy, during Madame Guiccioli's absence from Bologna, to go daily to her house at his usual hour of visiting her, and there, causing her apartments to be opened, to sit turning over her books, and writing in them.[1] He would then descend into her garden, where he passed hours in musing; and it was on an occasion of this kind, as he stood looking, in a state of unconscious reverie, into one of those fountains so common in the gardens of Italy, that there came suddenly into his mind such desolate fancies, such bodings of the misery he might bring on her he loved, by that doom which (as he has himself written) "makes it fatal to be loved[2]," that, overwhelmed with his own thoughts, he burst into an agony of tears.

During the same few days it was that he wrote in the last page of Madame Guiccioli's copy of "Corinne" the following remarkable note:—

"My dearest Teresa,—I have read this book in your garden;—my love, you were absent, or else I could not have read it. It is a favourite book of yours, and the writer was a friend of mine. You will not understand these English words, and *others* will not understand them—which is the reason I have not scrawled them in Italian. But you will recognise the hand-writing of him who passionately loved you, and you will divine that, over a book which was yours, he could only think of love. In that word, beautiful in all languages, but most so in yours—*Amor mio*—is comprised my existence here and hereafter. I feel I exist here, and I fear that I shall exist hereafter,—to *what* purpose you will decide; my destiny rests with you, and you are a woman, seventeen years of age, and two out of a convent. I wish that you had stayed there, with all my heart,—or, at least, that I had never met you in your married state.

"But all this is too late. I love you, and you love me,—at least, you *say so*, and *act* as if you *did* so, which last is a great consolation in all events. But *I* more than love you, and cannot cease to love you.

"Think of me, sometimes, when the Alps and the ocean divide us,—but they never will, unless you *wish* it. BYRON.

"Bologna, August 25. 1819."

LETTER 339. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Bologna, August 24. 1819.

"I wrote to you by last post, enclosing a buffooning letter for publication, addressed to the buffoon Roberts, who has thought proper to tie a canister to his own tail. It was written off-hand, and in the midst of circumstances not very favourable to facetiousness, so that there may, perhaps, be more bitterness than enough for that sort of small acid punch:—you will tell me.

"Keep the *anonymous*, in any case: it helps what fun there may be. But if the matter grow serious about *Don Juan*, and you feel *yourself* in a scrape, or *me* either, *own that I am the author*. *I* will never *shrink*; and if *you* do, I can always answer you in the question of Guatimozin to his minister—each being on his own coals.[3]

[1] One of these notes, written at the end of the 5th chapter, 18th book of Corinne ("Fragmens des Pensées de Corinne") is as follows:—

"I knew Madame de Stael well,—better than she knew Italy,—but I little thought that, one day, I should *think with her thoughts*, in the country where she has laid the scene of her most attractive production. She is sometimes right, and often wrong, about Italy and England; but almost always true in delineating the heart, which is of but one nation, and of no country,—or, rather, of all. BYRON.

"Bologna, August 23. 1819."

[2] "Oh Love! what is it, in this world of ours,
Which makes it fatal to be loved? ah! why
With cypress branches hast thou wreath'd thy bowers,
And made thy best interpreter a sigh?
As those who dote on odours pluck the flowers,
And place them on their breasts—but place to die—
Thus the frail beings we would fondly cherish
Are laid within our bosoms but to perish."
[*Don Juan*, c. iii. st. 2.]

[3] ["Guatimozin, together with his chief favourite, being subjected by Cortes to torture, in order to force from them a discovery of the royal treasures, the unhappy monarch bore the torments with invincible fortitude: his fellow-sufferer, however, overcome by the violence of the anguish, turned a dejected eye towards his master, which seemed to implore his permission to reveal all that he knew; but the high-spirited prince darting on him a look of authority, mingled with scorn, checked his weakness by asking him, 'Am I now reposing on a bed of flowers?' Overawed by the reproach,

"I wish that I had been in better spirits; but I am out of sorts, out of nerves, and now and then (I begin to fear) out of my senses. All this Italy has done for me, and not England: I defy all you, and your climate to boot, to make me mad. But if ever I do really become a bedlamite, and wear a strait waistcoat, let me be brought back among you; your people will then be proper company.

"I assure you what I here say and feel has nothing to do with England, either in a literary or personal point of view. All my present pleasures or plagues are as Italian as the opera. And after all, they are but trifles; for all this arises from my 'Dama's' being in the country for three days (at Capofiume). But as I could never live but for one human being at a time, (and, I assure you, *that one* has never been *myself*, as you may know by the consequences, for the *selfish* are *successful* in life,) I feel alone and unhappy.

"I have sent for my daughter from Venice, and I ride daily, and walk in a garden, under a purple canopy of grapes, and sit by a fountain, and talk with the gardener of his tools, which seem greater than Adam's, and with his wife, and with his son's wife, who is the youngest of the party, and, I think, talks best of the three. Then I revisit the Campo Santo, and my old friend, the sexton, has two — but *one* the prettiest daughter imaginable; and I amuse myself with contrasting her beautiful and innocent face of fifteen with the skulls with which he has peopled several cells, and particularly with that of one skull dated 1766, which was once covered (the tradition goes,) by the most lovely features of Bologna — noble and rich. When I look at these, and at this girl — when I think of what *they were*, and what she must be — why, then, my dear Murray, I won't shock you by saying what I think. It is little matter what becomes of us 'bearded men,' but I don't like the notion of a beautiful woman's lasting less than a beautiful tree — than her own picture — her own shadow, which won't change so to the sun as her face to the mirror. I must leave off, for my head aches consumedly. I have never been quite well since the night of the representation of Alfieri's Mirra, a fortnight ago.

"Yours ever."

LETTER 340. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Bologna, August 29. 1819.

"I have been in a rage these two days, and am still bilious therefrom. You shall hear. A captain of dragoons, * *, Hanoverian by birth, in the Papal troops at present, whom I had obliged by a loan when nobody would lend him a paul, recommended a horse to me, on sale by a Lieutenant * *, an officer who unites the sale of cattle to the purchase of men. I bought it. The next day, on shoeing the horse, we discovered the *thrush*, — the animal being warranted sound. I sent to reclaim the contract and the money. The lieutenant desired to speak with me in person. I consented. He came. It was his own particular request. He began a story. I asked him if he would return the money. He said no — but he would exchange. He asked an exorbitant price for his other horses. I told him that he was a thief. He said he was an *officer* and a man of honour, and pulled out a Parmesan passport signed by General Count Neipperg.[1] I answered, that as he was an officer, I would treat him as such; and that as to his being a gentleman, he might prove it by returning the money: as for his Parmesan passport, I should have valued it more if it had been a Parmesan cheese. He answered in high terms, and said that if it were the *morning* (it was about eight o'clock in the evening) he would have *satisfaction*. I then lost my temper: 'As for THAT,' I replied, 'you shall have it directly, — it will be *mutual* satisfaction, I can assure you. You are a thief, and, as you say, an officer; my pistols are in the next room loaded; take one of the candles, examine, and make your choice of weapons.' He replied, that *pistols* were *English weapons; he* always fought with the *sword*. I told him that I was able to accommodate him, having three regimental swords in a drawer near us: and he might take the longest and put himself on guard.

"All this passed in presence of a third person. He then said *No;* but to-morrow morning he would give me the meeting at any time or place. I answered that it was not usual to appoint meetings in the presence of witnesses, and that we had best speak man to man, and appoint time and instruments. But as the man present was leaving the room, the Lieutenant * *, before he could shut the door after him, ran out roaring 'Help and murder' most lustily, and fell into

the favourite persevered in his duty, and expired."— *Robertson's America*, vol. iii. p. 74.]

[1] [Shortly after the abdication of Napoleon Buonaparte, the Count was presented to Maria Louisa, and became, in the sequel, her chamberlain, and then her husband. He died in 1831.]

a sort of hysteric in the arms of about fifty people, who all saw that I had no weapon of any sort or kind about me, and followed him, asking him what the devil was the matter with him. Nothing would do: he ran away without his hat, and went to bed, ill of the fright. He then tried his complaint at the police, which dismissed it as frivolous. He is, I believe, gone away, or going.

"The horse was warranted, but, I believe, so worded that the villain will not be obliged to refund, according to law. He endeavoured to raise up an indictment of assault and battery, but as it was in a public inn, in a frequented street, there were too many witnesses to the contrary; and, as a military man, he has not cut a martial figure, even in the opinion of the priests. He ran off in such a hurry that he left his hat, and never missed it till he got to his hostel or inn. The facts are as I tell you, I can assure you. He began by 'coming Captain Grand over me,' or I should never have thought of trying his 'cunning in fence.' But what could I do? He talked of 'honour, and satisfaction, and his commission;' he produced a military passport; there are severe punishments for *regular duels* on the Continent, and trifling ones for *rencontres*, so that it is best to fight it out directly; he had robbed, and then wanted to insult me; — what could I do? My patience was gone, and the weapons at hand, fair and equal. Besides, it was just after dinner, when my digestion was bad, and I don't like to be disturbed. His friend * * is at Forli; we shall meet on my way back to Ravenna. The Hanoverian seems the greater rogue of the two; and if my valour does not ooze away like Acres's — 'Odds flints and triggers!' if it should be a rainy morning, and my stomach in disorder, there may be something for the obituary.

"Now pray, 'Sir Lucius, do not you look upon me as a very ill-used gentleman?' I send my Lieutenant to match Mr. Hobhouse's *Major* Cartwright: and so 'good morrow to you, good master Lieutenant.' With regard to other things I will write soon, but I have been quarreling and fooling till I can scribble no more."

In the month of September, Count Guiccioli, being called away by business to Ravenna, left his young Countess and her lover to the free enjoyment of each other's society at Bologna. The lady's ill health, which had been the cause of her thus remaining behind, was thought, soon after, to require the still further advantage of a removal to Venice; and the Count her husband, being written to on the subject, consented, with the most complaisant readiness, that she should proceed thither in company with Lord Byron. "Some business" (says the lady's own Memoir) "having called Count Guiccioli to Ravenna, I was obliged, by the state of my health, instead of accompanying him, to return to Venice, and he consented that Lord Byron should be the companion of my journey. We left Bologna on the fifteenth of September: we visited the Euganean Hills and Arquà, and wrote our names in the book which is presented to those who make this pilgrimage. But I cannot linger over these recollections of happiness; — the contrast with the present is too dreadful. If a blessed spirit, while in the full enjoyment of heavenly happiness, were sent down to this earth to suffer all its miseries, the contrast could not be more dreadful between the past and the present, than what I have endured from the moment when that terrible word reached my ears, and I for ever lost the hope of again beholding him, one look from whom I valued beyond all earth's happiness. When I arrived at Venice, the physicians ordered that I should try the country air, and Lord Byron, having a villa at La Mira, gave it up to me, and came to reside there with me. At this place we passed the autumn, and there I had the pleasure of forming your acquaintance." [1]

It was my good fortune, at this period, in the course of a short and hasty tour through the north of Italy, to pass five or six days with Lord Byron at Venice. I had written to him on my way thither to announce my coming, and to say how happy it would make

[1] "Il Conte Guiccioli doveva per affari ritornare a Ravenna; lo stato della mia salute esiggeva che io ritornassi in vece a Venezia. Egli acconsentì dunque che Lord Byron mi fosse compagno di viaggio. Partimmo da Bologna alli 15 di Sᵗᵉ. — visitammo insieme i Colli Euganei ed Arquà; scrivemmo i nostri nomi nel libro che si presenta a quelli che fanno quel pellegrinaggio. Ma sopra tali rimembranze di felicità non posso fermarmi, caro Signʳ. Moore; l'opposizione col presente é troppo forte, e se un anima benedetta nel pieno godimento di tutte le felicità celesti fosse mandata quaggiù e condannata a sopportare tutte le miserie della nostra terra non potrebbe sentire più terribile contrasto frà il passato ed il presente di quello che io sento dacchè quella terribile parola è giunta alle mie orecchie, dacchè ho perduto la speranza di più vedere quello di cui uno sguardo valeva per me più di tutte le felicità della terra. Giunti a Venezia i medici mi ordinarono di respirare l'aria della campagna. Egli aveva una villa alla Mira, — la cedesse a me, e venne meco. Là passammo l'autunno, e là ebbi il bene di fare la vostra conoscenza." — *MS.*

me could I tempt him to accompany me as far as Rome.

During my stay at Geneva, an opportunity had been afforded me of observing the exceeding readiness with which even persons the least disposed to be prejudiced gave an ear to any story relating to Lord Byron, in which the proper portions of odium and romance were but plausibly mingled. In the course of conversation, one day, with the late amiable and enlightened Monsieur D * *, that gentleman related, with much feeling, to my fellow-traveller and myself, the details of a late act of seduction of which Lord Byron had, he said, been guilty, and which was made to comprise within itself all the worst features of such unmanly frauds upon innocence; — the victim, a young unmarried lady, of one of the first families of Venice, whom the noble seducer had lured from her father's house to his own, and, after a few weeks, most inhumanly turned her out of doors. In vain, said the relator, did she entreat to become his servant, his slave; — in vain did she ask to remain in some dark corner of his mansion, from which she might be able to catch a glimpse of his form as he passed. Her betrayer was obdurate, and the unfortunate young lady, in despair at being thus abandoned by him, threw herself into the canal, from which she was taken out but to be consigned to a mad-house. Though convinced that there must be considerable exaggeration in this story, it was only on my arrival at Venice I ascertained that the whole was a romance; and that out of the circumstances (already laid before the reader) connected with Lord Byron's fantastic and, it must be owned, discreditable fancy for the Fornarina, this pathetic tale, so implicitly believed at Geneva, was fabricated.

Having parted at Milan with Lord John Russell, whom I had accompanied from England, and whom I was to rejoin, after a short visit to Rome, at Genoa, I made purchase of a small and (as it soon proved) crazy travelling carriage, and proceeded alone on my way to Venice. My time being limited, I stopped no longer at the intervening places than was sufficient to hurry over their respective wonders, and, leaving Padua at noon on the 8th of October, I found myself, about two o'clock, at the door of my friend's villa, at La Mira. He was but just up, and in his bath; but the servant having announced my arrival, he returned a message that, if I would wait till he was dressed, he would accompany me to Venice. The interval I employed in conversing with my old acquaintance, Fletcher, and in viewing, under his guidance, some of the apartments of the villa.

It was not long before Lord Byron himself made his appearance; and the delight I felt in meeting him once more, after a separation of so many years, was not a little heightened by observing that his pleasure was, to the full, as great, while it was rendered doubly touching by the evident rarity of such meetings to him of late, and the frank outbreak of cordiality and gaiety with which he gave way to his feelings. It would be impossible, indeed, to convey to those who have not, at some time or other, felt the charm of his manner, any idea of what it could be when under the influence of such pleasurable excitement as it was most flatteringly evident he experienced at this moment.

I was a good deal struck, however, by the alteration that had taken place in his personal appearance. He had grown fatter both in person and face, and the latter had most suffered by the change, — having lost, by the enlargement of the features, some of that refined and spiritualised look, that had, in other times, distinguished it. The addition of whiskers, too, which he had not long before been induced to adopt, from hearing that some one had said he had a "faccia di musico," as well as the length to which his hair grew down on his neck, and the rather foreign air of his coat and cap, — all combined to produce that dissimilarity to his former self I had observed in him. He was still, however, eminently handsome: and, in exchange for whatever his features might have lost of their high, romantic character, they had become more fitted for the expression of that arch, waggish wisdom, that Epicurean play of humour, which he had shown to be equally inherent in his various and prodigally gifted nature; while, by the somewhat increased roundness of the contours, the resemblance of his finely formed mouth and chin to those of the Belvidere Apollo had become still more striking.

His breakfast, which I found he rarely took before three or four o'clock in the afternoon, was speedily despatched, — his habit being to eat it standing, and the meal in general consisting of one or two raw eggs, a cup of tea without either milk or sugar, and a bit of dry biscuit. Before we took our departure, he presented me to the Countess Guiccioli, who was at this time, as my readers already know, living under the same roof with him at La Mira; and who, with a style of beauty singular in an Italian, as being fair-complexioned and delicate, left an impression upon my mind, during this our first

short interview, of intelligence and amiableness such as all that I have since known or heard of her has but served to confirm.

We now started together, Lord Byron and myself, in my little Milanese vehicle, for Fusina, — his portly gondolier Tita, in a rich livery and most redundant mustachios, having seated himself on the front of the carriage, to the no small trial of its strength, which had already once given way, even under my own weight, between Verona and Vicenza. On our arrival at Fusina, my noble friend, from his familiarity with all the details of the place, had it in his power to save me both trouble and expense in the different arrangements relative to the custom-house, remise, &c.; and the good-natured assiduity with which he bustled about in despatching these matters, gave me an opportunity of observing, in his use of the infirm limb, a much greater degree of activity than I had ever before, except in sparring, witnessed.

As we proceeded across the Lagoon in his gondola, the sun was just setting, and it was an evening such as Romance would have chosen for a first sight of Venice, rising "with her tiara of bright towers" above the wave; while, to complete, as might be imagined, the solemn interest of the scene, I beheld it in company with him who had lately given a new life to its glories, and sung of that fair City of the Sea thus grandly: —

"I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sat in state, throned in her hundred isles."

But, whatever emotions the first sight of such a scene might, under other circumstances, have inspired me with, the mood of mind in which I now viewed it was altogether the very reverse of what might have been expected. The exuberant gaiety of my companion, and the recollections — any thing but romantic — into which our conversation wandered, put at once completely to flight all poetical and historical associations; and our course was, I am almost ashamed to say, one of uninterrupted merriment and laughter till we found ourselves at the steps of my friend's palazzo on the Grand Canal. All that had ever happened, of gay or ridiculous, during our London life together, — his scrapes and my lecturings, — our joint adventures with the Bores and Blues, the two great enemies, as he always called them, of London happiness, — our joyous nights together at Watier's, Kinnaird's, &c. and "that d—d supper of Rancliffe's which *ought* to have been a dinner," — all was passed rapidly in review between us, and with a flow of humour and hilarity, on his side, of which it would have been difficult, even for persons far graver than I can pretend to be, not to have caught the contagion.

He had all along expressed his determination that I should not go to any hotel, but fix my quarters at his house during the period of my stay; and, had he been residing there himself, such an arrangement would have been all that I most desired. But, this not being the case, a common hotel was, I thought, a far readier resource; and I therefore entreated that he would allow me to order an apartment at the Gran Bretagna, which had the reputation, I understood, of being a comfortable hotel. This, however, he would not hear of; and, as an inducement for me to agree to his plan, said that, as long as I chose to stay, though he should be obliged to return to La Mira in the evenings, he would make it a point to come to Venice every day and dine with me. As we now turned into the dismal canal, and stopped before his damp-looking mansion, my predilection for the Gran Bretagna returned in full force; and I again ventured to hint that it would save an abundance of trouble to let me proceed thither. But "No — no," he answered, — "I see you think you'll be very uncomfortable here; but you'll find that it is not quite so bad as you expect."

As I groped my way after him through the dark hall, he cried out, "Keep clear of the dog;" and before we had proceeded many paces farther, "Take care, or that monkey will fly at you;" — a curious proof, among many others, of his fidelity to all the tastes of his youth, as it agrees perfectly with the description of his life at Newstead, in 1809, and of the sort of menagerie which his visitors had then to encounter in their progress through his hall. Having escaped these dangers, I followed him up the staircase to the apartment destined for me. All this time he had been despatching servants in various directions, — one, to procure me a *laquais de place;* another, to go in quest of Mr. Alexander Scott, to whom he wished to give me in charge; while a third was sent to order his Segretario to come to him. "So, then, you keep a Secretary?" I said. "Yes," he answered, "a fellow who *can't write*[1] —

[1] The title of Segretario is sometimes given, as in this case, to a head-servant or house-steward.

but such are the names these pompous people give to things."

When we had reached the door of the apartment it was discovered to be locked, and, to all appearance, had been so for some time, as the key could not be found; — a circumstance which, to my English apprehension, naturally connected itself with notions of damp and desolation, and I again sighed inwardly for the Gran Bretagna. Impatient at the delay of the key, my noble host, with one of his humorous maledictions, gave a vigorous kick to the door and burst it open; on which we at once entered into an apartment not only spacious and elegant, but wearing an aspect of comfort and habitableness which to a traveller's eye is as welcome as it is rare. "Here," he said, in a voice whose every tone spoke kindness and hospitality, — "these are the rooms I use myself, and here I mean to establish you."

He had ordered dinner from some Tratteria, and while waiting its arrival — as well as that of Mr. Alexander Scott, whom he had invited to join us — we stood out on the balcony, in order that, before the daylight was quite gone, I might have some glimpses of the scene which the Canal presented. Happening to remark, in looking up at the clouds, which were still bright in the west, that "what had struck me in Italian sunsets was that peculiar rosy hue ——" I had hardly pronounced the word "rosy," when Lord Byron, clapping his hand on my mouth, said, with a laugh, "Come, d—n it, Tom, *don't* be poetical." Among the few gondolas passing at the time, there was one at some distance, in which sat two gentlemen, who had the appearance of being English; and, observing them to look our way, Lord Byron putting his arms a-kimbo, said with a sort of comic swagger, "Ah! if you, John Bulls, knew who the two fellows are now standing up here, I think you *would* stare!" — I risk mentioning these things, though aware how they may be turned against myself, for the sake of the otherwise indescribable traits of manner and character which they convey. After a very agreeable dinner, through which the jest, the story, and the laugh were almost uninterruptedly carried on, our noble host took leave of us to return to La Mira, while Mr. Scott and I went to one of the theatres, to see the Ottavia of Alfieri.

The ensuing evenings, during my stay, were passed much in the same manner, — my mornings being devoted, under the kind superintendence of Mr. Scott, to a hasty, and, I fear, unprofitable view of the treasures of art with which Venice abounds. On the subjects of painting and sculpture Lord Byron has, in several of his letters, expressed strongly and, as to most persons will appear, heretically his opinions. In his want, however, of a due appreciation of these arts, he but resembled some of his great precursors in the field of poetry; — both Tasso and Milton, for example, having evinced so little tendency to such tastes [1], that, throughout the whole of their pages, there is not, I fear, one single allusion to any of those great masters of the pencil and chisel, whose works, nevertheless, both had seen. That Lord Byron, though despising the imposture and jargon with which the worship of the Arts is, like other worships, clogged and mystified, felt deeply, more especially in sculpture, whatever imaged forth true grace and energy, appears from passages of his poetry, which are in every body's memory, and not a line of which but thrills alive with a sense of grandeur and beauty such as it never entered into the capacity of a mere connoisseur even to conceive.

In reference to this subject, as we were conversing one day after dinner about the various collections I had visited that morning, on my saying that fearful as I was, at all times, of praising any picture, lest I should draw upon myself the connoisseur's sneer for my pains, I would yet, to *him*, venture to own that I had seen a picture at Milan which —— "The Hagar!" [2] he exclaimed, eagerly interrupting me; and it was in fact this very picture I was about to mention as having wakened in me, by the truth of its expression, more real emotion than any I had yet seen among the chefs-d'œuvre of Venice. It was with no small degree of pride and pleasure I now discovered that my noble friend had felt equally with myself the affecting mixture of sorrow and reproach with which the woman's eyes tell the whole story in that picture.

On the second evening of my stay, Lord

[1] That this was the case with Milton is acknowledged by Richardson, who admired both Milton and the Arts too warmly to make such an admission upon any but valid grounds. "He does not appear," says this writer, "to have much regarded what was done with the pencil; no, not even when in Italy, in Rome, in the Vatican. Neither does it seem sculpture was much esteemed by him." After an authority like this, the theories of Hayley and others, with respect to the impressions left upon Milton's mind by the works of art he had seen in Italy, are hardly worth a thought. Though it may be conceded that Dante was an admirer of the Arts, his recommendation of the Apocalypse to Giotto, as a source of subjects for the pencil, shows, at least, what indifferent judges poets are, in general, of the sort of fancies fittest to be embodied by the painter.

[2] [Abraham dismissing Hagar, by Guercino.]

Byron having, as before, left us for La Mira, I most willingly accepted the offer of Mr. Scott to introduce me to the conversazioni of the two celebrated ladies, with whose names, as leaders of Venetian fashion, the tourists to Italy have made every body acquainted. To the Countess Albrizzi's parties Lord Byron had chiefly confined himself during the first winter he passed at Venice; but the tone of conversation at these small meetings being much too learned for his tastes, he was induced, the following year, to discontinue his attendance at them, and chose, in preference, the less erudite, but more easy, society of the Countess Benzoni. Of the sort of learning sometimes displayed by the "blue" visitants at Madame Albrizzi's, a circumstance mentioned by the noble poet himself may afford some idea. The conversation happening to turn, one evening, upon the statue of Washington, by Canova, which had been just shipped off for the United States, Madame Albrizzi, who was then engaged in compiling a Description Raisonnée of Canova's works, and was anxious for information respecting the subject of this statue, requested that some of her learned guests would detail to her all they knew of him. This task a Signor * * (author of a book on Geography and Statistics) undertook to perform, and, after some other equally sage and authentic details, concluded by informing her that "Washington was killed in a duel by Burke." — "What," exclaimed Lord Byron, as he stood biting his lips with impatience during this conversation, "what, in the name of folly, are you all thinking of?" — for he now recollected the famous duel between Hamilton and Colonel Burr, whom, it was evident, this learned worthy had confounded with Washington and Burke!

In addition to the motives easily conceivable for exchanging such a society for one that offered, at least, repose from such erudite efforts, there was also another cause more immediately leading to the discontinuance of his visits to Madame Albrizzi. This lady, who has been sometimes honoured with the title of "The De Staël of Italy," had written a book called "Portraits[1]," containing sketches of the characters of various persons of note; and it being her intention to introduce Lord Byron into this assemblage, she had it intimated to his Lordship that an article in which his portraiture had been attempted was to appear in a new edition she was about to publish of her work. It was expected, of course, that this intimation would awaken in him some desire to see the sketch; but, on the contrary, he was provoking enough not to manifest the least symptoms of curiosity. Again and again was the same hint, with as little success, conveyed; till, at length, on finding that no impression could be produced in this manner, a direct offer was made, in Madame Albrizzi's own name, to submit the article to his perusal. He could now contain himself no longer. With more sincerity than politeness, he returned for answer to the lady, that he was by no means ambitious of appearing in her work; that, from the shortness, as well as the distant nature of their acquaintance, it was impossible she could have qualified herself to be his portrait-painter, and that, in short, she could not oblige him more than by committing the article to the flames.

Whether the tribute thus unceremoniously treated ever met the eyes of Lord Byron, I know not; but he could hardly, I think, had he seen it, have escaped a slight touch of remorse at having thus spurned from him a portrait drawn in no unfriendly spirit, and, though affectedly expressed, seizing some of the less obvious features of his character, — as, for instance, that diffidence so little to be expected from a career like his, — with the discriminating niceness of a female hand. The following are extracts from this Portrait: —

"'Toi, dont le monde encore ignore le vrai nom,
Esprit mystérieux, Mortel, Ange, ou Démon,
Qui que tu sois, Byron, bon ou fatal génie,
J'aime de tes conceits la sauvage harmonie.'
LAMARTINE.

"It would be to little purpose to dwell upon the mere beauty of a countenance in which the expression of an extraordinary mind was so conspicuous. What serenity was seated on the forehead, adorned with the finest chestnut hair, light, curling, and disposed with such art, that the art was hidden in the imitation of most pleasing nature! What varied expression in his eyes! They were of the azure colour of the heavens, from which they seemed to derive their origin. His teeth, in form, in colour, in transparency, resembled pearls; but his cheeks were too delicately tinged with the hue of the pale rose. His neck, which he was in the habit of keeping uncovered as much as the usages of society permitted, seemed to have been formed in a mould, and was very white. His hands were as beautiful as if they had been the works of art. His figure left nothing to be desired, particularly by those who found rather a grace than a defect in a certain light and gentle undulation of the person when he entered a room, and of which you hardly felt tempted

[1] ["Ritratti di Uomini Illustri," 8vo. Madame Albrizzi died in September 1836, at the age of seventy-five.]

to enquire the cause. Indeed it was scarcely perceptible, — the clothes he wore were so long.

" He was never seen to walk through the streets of Venice, nor along the pleasant banks of the Brenta, where he spent some weeks of the summer; and there are some who assert that he has never seen, excepting from a window, the wonders of the ' Piazza di San Marco;' — so powerful in him was the desire of not showing himself to be deformed in any part of his person. I, however, believe that he has often gazed on those wonders, but in the late and solitary hour, when the stupendous edifices which surrounded him, illuminated by the soft and placid light of the moon, appeared a thousand times more lovely.

" His face appeared tranquil like the ocean on a fine spring morning; but, like it, in an instant became changed into the tempestuous and terrible, if a passion, (a passion did I say?) a thought, a word, occurred to disturb his mind. His eyes then lost all their sweetness, and sparkled so that it became difficult to look on them. So rapid a change would not have been thought possible; but it was impossible to avoid acknowledging that the natural state of his mind was the tempestuous.

" What delighted him greatly one day annoyed him the next; and whenever he appeared constant in the practice of any habits, it arose merely from the indifference, not to say contempt, in which he held them all: whatever they might be, they were not worthy that he should occupy his thoughts with them. His heart was highly sensitive, and suffered itself to be governed in an extraordinary degree by sympathy; but his imagination carried him away, and spoiled every thing. He believed in presages, and delighted in the recollection that he held this belief in common with Napoleon. It appeared that, in proportion as his intellectual education was cultivated, his moral education was neglected, and that he never suffered himself to know or observe other restraints than those imposed by his inclinations. Nevertheless, who could believe that he had a constant, and almost infantine timidity, of which the evidences were so apparent as to render its existence indisputable, notwithstanding the difficulty experienced in associating with Lord Byron a sentiment which had the appearance of modesty? Conscious as he was that, wherever he presented himself, all eyes were fixed on him, and all lips, particularly those of the women, were opened to say, ' There he is, that is Lord Byron,' — he necessarily found himself in the situation of an actor obliged to sustain a character, and to render an account, not to others (for about them he gave himself no concern), but to himself, of his every action and word. This occasioned him a feeling of uneasiness which was obvious to every one.

" He remarked on a certain subject (which in 1814 was the topic of universal discourse) that ' the world was worth neither the trouble taken in its conquest, nor the regret felt at its loss,' which saying (if the worth of an expression could ever equal that of many and great actions) would almost show the thoughts and feelings of Lord Byron to be more stupendous and unmeasured than those of him respecting whom he spoke.

" His gymnastic exercises were sometimes violent, and at others almost nothing. His body, like his spirit, readily accommodated itself to all his inclinations. During an entire winter, he went out every morning alone to row himself to the island of Armenians, (a small island situated in the midst of the tranquil lagune, and distant from Venice about half a league,) to enjoy the society of those learned and hospitable monks, and to learn their difficult language; and, in the evening, entering again into his gondola, he went, but only for a couple of hours, into company. A second winter, whenever the water of the lagune was violently agitated, he was observed to cross it, and landing on the nearest *terra firma*, to fatigue at least two horses with riding.

" No one ever heard him utter a word of French, although he was perfectly conversant with that language. He hated the nation and its modern literature; in like manner, he held the modern Italian literature in contempt, and said it possessed but one living author, — a restriction which I know not whether to term ridiculous, or false and injurious. His voice was sufficiently sweet and flexible. He spoke with much suavity, if not contradicted, but rather addressed himself to his neighbour than to the entire company.

" Very little food sufficed him; and he preferred fish to flesh for this extraordinary reason, that the latter, he said, rendered him ferocious. He disliked seeing women eat; and the cause of this extraordinary antipathy must be sought in the dread he always had, that the notion he loved to cherish of their perfection and almost divine nature might be disturbed. Having always been governed by them, it would seem that his very self-love was pleased to take refuge in the idea of their excellence, — a sentiment which he knew how (God knows how) to reconcile with the contempt in which, shortly after-

wards, almost with the appearance of satisfaction, he seemed to hold them. But contradictions ought not to surprise us in characters like Lord Byron's; and then, who does not know that the slave holds in detestation his ruler?

"Lord Byron disliked his countrymen, but only because he knew that his morals were held in contempt by them. The English, themselves rigid observers of family duties, could not pardon him the neglect of his, nor his trampling on principles; therefore neither did he like being presented to them, nor did they, especially when they had their wives with them, like to cultivate his acquaintance. Still there was a strong desire in all of them to see him, and the women in particular, who did not dare to look at him but by stealth, said, in an under voice, 'What a pity it is!' If, however, any of his compatriots of exalted rank and of high reputation came forward to treat him with courtesy, he showed himself obviously flattered by it, and was greatly pleased with such association. It seemed that to the wound which remained always open in his ulcerated heart such soothing attentions were as drops of healing balm, which comforted him.

"Speaking of his marriage, — a delicate subject, but one still agreeable to him, if it was treated in a friendly voice, — he was greatly moved, and said it had been the innocent cause of all his errors and all his griefs. Of his wife he spoke with much respect and affection. He said she was an illustrious lady, distinguished for the qualities of her heart and understanding, and that all the fault of their cruel separation lay with himself. Now, was such language dictated by justice or by vanity? Does it not bring to mind the saying of Julius, that the wife of Cæsar must not even be suspected? What vanity in that saying of Cæsar! In fact, if it had not been from vanity, Lord Byron would have admitted this to no one. Of his young daughter, his dear Ada, he spoke with great tenderness, and seemed to be pleased at the great sacrifice he had made in leaving her to comfort her mother. The intense hatred he bore his mother-in-law, and a sort of Euryclea of Lady Byron, two women to whose influence he, in a great measure, attributed her estrangement from him, — demonstrated clearly how painful the separation was to him, notwithstanding some bitter pleasantries which occasionally occur in his writings against her also, dictated rather by rancour than by indifference."

From the time of his misunderstanding with Madame Albrizzi, the visits of the noble poet were transferred to the house of the other great rallying point of Venetian society, Madame Benzoni, — a lady in whose manners, though she had long ceased to be young, there still lingered much of that attaching charm, which a youth passed in successful efforts to please seldom fails to leave behind.[1] That those powers of pleasing, too, were not yet gone, the fidelity of, at least, one devoted admirer testified; nor is she supposed to have thought it impossible that Lord Byron himself might yet be linked on at the end of that long chain of lovers, which had, through so many years, graced the triumphs of her beauty. If, however, there could have been, in any case, the slightest chance of such a conquest, she had herself completely frustrated it by introducing her distinguished visitor to Madame Guiccioli, — a step by which she at last lost, too, even the ornament of his presence at her parties, as in consequence of some slighting conduct on her part, towards his "Dama," he discontinued his attendance at her evening assemblies, and at the time of my visit to Venice had given up society altogether.

I could soon collect, from the tone held respecting his conduct at Madame Benzoni's, how subversive of all the morality of intrigue they considered the late step of which he had been guilty in withdrawing his acknowledged "Amica" from the protection of her husband, and placing her, at once, under the same roof with himself. "You must really (said the hostess herself to me) scold your friend; — till this unfortunate affair, he conducted himself *so* well!" — a eulogy on his previous moral conduct which, when I reported it the following day to my noble host, provoked at once a smile and sigh from his lips.

The chief subject of our conversation,

[1] ["The charms of the Countess Marina Benzoni," says Lady Morgan, "have been sung by all who ever tingled a guitar to the tune of 'La Biondina in Gondoletta;' but the spell of her Venetian manner, its softness and naïveté, are less susceptible of description. Reviving recollections of the brilliant and pleasurable circles over which she once presided, by many a pleasant anecdote well recited, and often recurring to the present sad and hapless state of her unfortunate country, to the last doing its honours by foreign visitants, and still presenting the lineaments and colouring of the portraits of Titian and Giorgione, she resembles the priestess of some desolated temple, still hovering round the ruined altars whose fires are extinct and festivals eclipsed for ever."— *Italy*, vol. ii. p. 472.]

when alone, was his marriage, and the load of obloquy which it had brought upon him. He was most anxious to know the worst that had been alleged of his conduct; and as this was our first opportunity of speaking together on the subject, I did not hesitate to put his candour most searchingly to the proof, not only by enumerating the various charges I had heard brought against him by others, but by specifying such portions of these charges as I had been inclined to think not incredible myself. To all this he listened with patience, and answered with the most unhesitating frankness, laughing to scorn the tales of unmanly outrage related of him, but, at the same time, acknowledging that there had been in his conduct but too much to blame and regret, and stating one or two occasions, during his domestic life, when he had been irritated into letting "the breath of bitter words" escape him, — words, rather those of the unquiet spirit that possessed him than his own, and which he now evidently remembered with a degree of remorse and pain which might well have entitled them to be forgotten by others.

It was, at the same time, manifest, that, whatever admissions he might be inclined to make respecting his own delinquencies, the inordinate measure of the punishment dealt out to him had sunk deeply into his mind, and, with the usual effect of such injustice, drove him also to be unjust himself; — so much so, indeed, as to impute to the quarter, to which he now traced all his ill fate, a feeling of fixed hostility to himself, which would not rest, he thought, even at his grave, but continue to persecute his memory, as it was now embittering his life. So strong was this impression upon him, that during one of our few intervals of seriousness, he conjured me, by our friendship, if, as he both felt and hoped, I should survive him, not to let unmerited censure settle upon his name, but, while I surrendered him up to condemnation, where he deserved it, to vindicate him where aspersed.

How groundless and wrongful were these apprehensions, the early death which he so often predicted and sighed for has enabled us, unfortunately but too soon, to testify. So far from having to defend him against any such assailants, an unworthy voice or two, from persons more injurious as friends than as enemies, is all that I find raised in hostility to his name; while by none, I am inclined to think, would a generous amnesty over his grave be more readily and cordially concurred in than by her, among whose numerous virtues a forgiving charity towards himself was the only one to which she had not yet taught him to render justice.

I have already had occasion to remark, in another part of this work, that with persons who, like Lord Byron, live centred in their own tremulous web of sensitiveness, those friends of whom they see least, and who, therefore, least frequently come in collision with them in those every-day realities from which such natures shrink so morbidly, have proportionately a greater chance of retaining a hold on their affections. There is, however, in long absence from persons of this temperament, another description of risk hardly less, perhaps, to be dreaded. If the station a friend holds in their hearts is, in near intercourse with them, in danger from their sensitiveness, it is almost equally, perhaps, at the mercy of their too active imaginations during absence. On this very point, I recollect once expressing my apprehensions to Lord Byron, in a passage of a letter addressed to him but a short time before his death, of which the following is, as nearly as I can recall it, the substance: — "When *with* you, I feel *sure* of you; but, at a distance, one is often a little afraid of being made the victim, all of a sudden, of some of those fanciful suspicions, which, like meteoric stones, generate themselves (God knows how) in the upper regions of your imagination, and come clattering down upon our heads, some fine sunny day, when we are least expecting such an invasion."

In writing thus to him, I had more particularly in recollection a fancy of this kind respecting myself, which he had, not long before my present visit to him at Venice, taken into his head. In a ludicrous, and now, perhaps, forgotten publication of mine, giving an account of the adventures of an English family in Paris, there had occurred the following description of the chief hero of the tale: —

> "A fine, sallow, sublime sort of Werter-faced man,
> With mustachios which gave (what we read of so oft)
> The dear Corsair expression, half savage, half soft, —
> As hyænas in love may be fancied to look, or
> A something between Abelard and old Blucher." [1]

On seeing this doggrel, my noble friend, — as I might, indeed, with a little more thought, have anticipated, — conceived the notion that I meant to throw ridicule on his whole race of poetic heroes, and accordingly, as I learned from persons then in frequent intercourse with him, flew out into one of his fits of half humorous rage against me. This he now confessed himself, and, in

[1] [See "Fudge Family in Paris," Ep. v.]

laughing over the circumstance with me, owned that he had even gone so far as, in his first moments of wrath, to contemplate some little retaliation for this perfidious hit at his heroes. "But when I recollected," said he, "what pleasure it would give the whole tribe of blockheads and blues to see you and me turning out against each other, I gave up the idea." He was, indeed, a striking instance of what may be almost invariably observed, that they who best know how to wield the weapon of ridicule themselves, are the most alive to its power in the hands of others. I remember, one day, — in the year 1813, I think, — as we were conversing together about critics and their influence on the public, "For my part," he exclaimed, "I don't care what they say of me, so they don't quiz me." — "Oh, you need not fear that," — I answered, with something, perhaps, of a half-suppressed smile on my features, — "nobody could quiz *you*." — "*You could*, you villain!" he replied, clenching his hand at me, and looking, at the same time, with comic earnestness into my face.

Before I proceed any farther with my own recollections, I shall here take the opportunity of extracting some curious particulars respecting the habits and mode of life of my friend while at Venice, from an account obligingly furnished me by a gentleman who long resided in that city, and who, during the greater part of Lord Byron's stay, lived on terms of the most friendly intimacy with him.

"I have often lamented that I kept no notes of his observations during our rides and aquatic excursions. Nothing could exceed the vivacity and variety of his conversation, or the cheerfulness of his manner. His remarks on the surrounding objects were always original: and most particularly striking was the quickness with which he availed himself of every circumstance, however trifling in itself, and such as would have escaped the notice of almost any other person, to carry his point in such arguments as we might chance to be engaged in. He was feelingly alive to the beauties of nature, and took great interest in any observations, which, as a dabbler in the arts, I ventured to make upon the effects of light and shadow, or the changes produced in the colour of objects by every variation in the atmosphere.

"The spot where we usually mounted our horses had been a Jewish cemetery; but the French, during their occupation of Venice, had thrown down the enclosures, and levelled all the tombstones with the ground, in order that they might not interfere with the fortifications upon the Lido, under the guns of which it was situated. To this place, as it was known to be that where he alighted from his gondola and met his horses, the curious amongst our country people, who were anxious to obtain a glimpse of him, used to resort; and it was amusing in the extreme to witness the excessive coolness with which ladies, as well as gentlemen, would advance within a very few paces of him, eyeing him, some with their glasses, as they would have done a statue in a museum, or the wild beasts at Exeter 'Change. However flattering this might be to a man's vanity, Lord Byron, though he bore it very patiently, expressed himself, as I believe he really was, excessively annoyed at it.

"I have said that our usual ride was along the sea-shore, and that the spot where we took horse, and of course dismounted, had been a cemetery. It will readily be believed, that some caution was necessary in riding over the broken tombstones, and that it was altogether an awkward place for horses to pass. As the length of our ride was not very great, scarcely more than six miles in all, we seldom rode fast, that we might at least prolong its duration, and enjoy as much as possible the refreshing air of the Adriatic. One day, as we were leisurely returning homewards, Lord Byron, all at once, and without saying any thing to me, set spurs to his horse and started off at full gallop, making the greatest haste he could to get to his gondola. I could not conceive what fit had seized him, and had some difficulty in keeping even within a reasonable distance of him, while I looked around me to discover, if I were able, what could be the cause of his unusual precipitation. At length I perceived at some distance two or three gentlemen, who were running along the opposite side of the island nearest the Lagoon, parallel with him, towards his gondola, hoping to get there in time to see him alight; and a race actually took place between them, he endeavouring to outstrip them. In this he, in fact, succeeded, and, throwing himself quickly from his horse, leapt into his gondola, of which he hastily closed the blinds, ensconcing himself in a corner so as not to be seen. For my own part, not choosing to risk my neck over the ground I have spoken of, I followed more leisurely as soon as I came amongst the gravestones, but got to the place of embarkation just at the same moment with my curious countrymen, and in time to witness their disappointment at having had their run for nothing. I found him exulting in his success in outstripping them. He expressed in strong terms his annoyance at what he called their impertinence, whilst I

could not but laugh at his impatience, as well as at the mortification of the unfortunate pedestrians, whose eagerness to see him, I said, was, in my opinion, highly flattering to him. That, he replied, depended on the feeling with which they came; and he had not the vanity to believe that they were influenced by any admiration of his character or of his abilities, but that they were impelled merely by idle curiosity. Whether it was so or not, I cannot help thinking that if they had been of the other sex, he would not have been so eager to escape from their observation, as in that case he would have repaid them glance for glance.

"The curiosity that was expressed by all classes of travellers to see him, and the eagerness with which they endeavoured to pick up any anecdotes of his mode of life, were carried to a length which will hardly be credited. It formed the chief subject of their enquiries of the gondoliers who conveyed them from terra firma to the floating city; and these people, who are generally loquacious, were not at all backward in administering to the taste and humours of their passengers, relating to them the most extravagant and often unfounded stories. They took care to point out the house where he lived, and to give such hints of his movements as might afford them an opportunity of seeing him. Many of the English visitors, under pretext of seeing his house, in which there were no paintings of any consequence, nor, besides himself, any thing worthy of notice, contrived to obtain admittance through the cupidity of his servants, and with the most barefaced impudence forced their way even into his bedroom, in the hopes of seeing him. Hence arose, in a great measure, his bitterness towards them, which he has expressed in a note to one of his poems, on the occasion of some unfounded remark made upon him by an anonymous traveller in Italy; and it certainly appears well calculated to foster that cynicism which prevails in his latter works more particularly, and which, as well as the misanthropical expressions that occur in those which first raised his reputation, I do not believe to have been his natural feeling. Of this I am certain, that I never witnessed greater kindness than in Lord Byron.

"The inmates of his family were all extremely attached to him, and would have endured any thing on his account. He was indeed culpably lenient to them; for even when instances occurred of their neglecting their duty, or taking an undue advantage of his good-nature, he rather bantered than spoke seriously to them upon it, and could not bring himself to discharge them, even when he had threatened to do so. An instance occurred within my knowledge of his unwillingness to act harshly towards a tradesman whom he had materially assisted, not only by lending him money, but by forwarding his interest in every way that he could. Notwithstanding repeated acts of kindness on Lord Byron's part, this man robbed and cheated him in the most barefaced manner; and when at length Lord Byron was induced to sue him at law for the recovery of his money, the only punishment he inflicted upon him, when sentence against him was passed, was to put him in prison for one week, and then to let him out again, although his debtor had subjected him to a considerable additional expense by dragging him into all the different courts of appeal, and that he never at last recovered one halfpenny of the money owed to him. Upon this subject he writes to me from Ravenna, 'If * * * is *in* (prison), let him out; if *out*, put him in for a week, merely for a lesson, and give him a good lecture.'

"He was also ever ready to assist the distressed, and he was most unostentatious in his charities: for besides considerable sums which he gave away to applicants at his own house, he contributed largely by weekly and monthly allowances to persons whom he had never seen, and who, as the money reached them by other hands, did not even know who was their benefactor. One or two instances might be adduced where his charity certainly bore an appearance of ostentation; one particularly, when he sent fifty louis d'or to a poor printer whose house had been burnt to the ground, and all his property destroyed; but even this was not unattended with advantage; for it in a manner compelled the Austrian authorities to do something for the poor sufferer, which I have no hesitation in saying they would not have done otherwise; and I attribute it entirely to the publicity of his donation, that they allowed the man the use of an unoccupied house belonging to the government until he could rebuild his own, or re-establish his business elsewhere. Other instances might be perhaps discovered where his liberalities proceeded from selfish, and not very worthy motives[1]; but these are rare, and it would be unjust in the extreme to assume them as proofs of his character."

[1] The writer here, no doubt, alludes to such questionable liberalities as those exercised towards the husbands of his two favourites, Madame Segati and the Fornarina.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1819.

LA MIRA AND VENICE. — PROPOSITION OF COUNT GUICCIOLI. — ANECDOTES. — WIELAND. — ALLEGRA. — PRESENTATION OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY TO MR. MOORE. — LETTERS TO HOPPNER, MURRAY, AND WILLIAM BANKES. — OUTCRY AGAINST DON JUAN. — THE PROPHECY OF DANTE. — PROJECTED EMIGRATION TO SOUTH AMERICA. — FERRARA. — THIRD CANTO OF DON JUAN COMPLETED. — DEPARTURE OF COUNT AND COUNTESS GUICCIOLI FOR RAVENNA.

It has been already mentioned that, in writing to my noble friend to announce my coming, I had expressed a hope that he would be able to go on with me to Rome; and I had the gratification of finding, on my arrival, that he was fully prepared to enter into this plan. On becoming acquainted, however, with all the details of his present situation, I so far sacrificed my own wishes and pleasure as to advise strongly that he should remain at La Mira. In the first place, I saw reason to apprehend that his leaving Madame Guiccioli at this crisis might be the means of drawing upon him the suspicion of neglecting, if not actually deserting, a young person who had just sacrificed so much to her devotion for him, and whose position, at this moment, between the Count and Lord Byron, it required all the generous prudence of the latter to shield from shame or fall. There had just occurred too, as it appeared to me, a most favourable opening for the retrieval of, at least, the imprudent part of the transaction, by replacing the lady instantly under her husband's protection, and thus enabling her still to retain that station in society which, in such society, nothing but such imprudence could have endangered.

This latter hope had been suggested by a letter he one day showed me, (as we were dining together alone, at the well-known Pellegrino,) which had that morning been received by the Contessa from her husband, and the chief object of which was — *not* to express any censure of her conduct, but to suggest that she should prevail upon her noble admirer to transfer into his keeping a sum of 1000*l.*, which was then lying, if I remember right, in the hands of Lord Byron's banker at Ravenna, but which the worthy Count professed to think would be more advantageously placed in his own. Security, the writer added, would be given, and five per cent. interest allowed; as to accept of the sum on any other terms he should hold to be an "avvilimento" to him. Though, as regarded the lady herself, who has since proved, by a most noble sacrifice, how perfectly disinterested were her feelings throughout [1], this trait of so wholly opposite a character in her lord must have still further increased her disgust at returning to him, yet so important did it seem, as well for her friend's sake as her own, to retrace, while there was yet time, their last imprudent step, that even the sacrifice of this sum, which I saw would materially facilitate such an arrangement, did not appear to me by any means too high a price to pay for it. On this point, however, my noble friend entirely differed with me; and nothing could be more humorous and amusing than the manner in which, in his newly assumed character of a lover of money, he dilated on the many virtues of a thousand pounds, and his determination not to part with a single one of them to Count Guiccioli. Of his confidence, too, in his own power of extricating himself from this difficulty he spoke with equal gaiety and humour; and Mr. Scott, who joined our party after dinner, having taken the same view of the subject as I did, he laid a wager of two sequins with that gentleman, that, without any such disbursement, he would yet bring all right again, and "save the lady and the money too."

[1] The circumstance here alluded to may be most clearly, perhaps, communicated to my readers through the medium of the following extract from a letter which Mr. Barry (the friend and banker of Lord Byron) did me the favour of addressing to me, soon after his Lordship's death: — "When Lord Byron went to Greece, he gave me orders to advance money to Madame Guiccioli; but that lady would never consent to receive any. His Lordship had also told me that he meant to leave his will in my hands, and that there would be a bequest in it of 10,000*l.* to Madame Guiccioli. He mentioned this circumstance also to Lord Blessington. When the melancholy news of his death reached me, I took for granted that this will would be found among the sealed papers he had left with me; but there was no such instrument. I immediately then wrote to Madame Guiccioli, enquiring if she knew any thing concerning it, and mentioning, at the same time, what his Lordship had said as to the legacy. To this the lady replied, that he had frequently spoken to her on the same subject, but that she had always cut the conversation short, as it was a topic she by no means liked to hear him speak upon. In addition, she expressed a wish that no such will as I had mentioned would be found; as her circumstances were already sufficiently independent, and the world might put a wrong construction on her attachment, should it appear that her fortunes were, in any degree, bettered by it."

It is indeed certain, that he had at this time taken up the whim (for it hardly deserves a more serious name) of minute and constant watchfulness over his expenditure; and, as most usually happens, it was with the increase of his means that this increased sense of the value of money came. The first symptom I saw of this new fancy of his was the exceeding joy which he manifested on my presenting to him a rouleau of twenty Napoleons, which Lord Kinnaird, to whom he had, on some occasion, lent that sum, had intrusted me with, at Milan, to deliver into his hands. With the most joyous and diverting eagerness, he tore open the paper, and, in counting over the sum, stopped frequently to congratulate himself on the recovery of it.

Of his household frugalities I speak but on the authority of others; but it is not difficult to conceive that, with a restless spirit like his, which delighted always in having something to contend with, and which, but a short time before, "for want," as he said, "of something craggy to break upon," had tortured itself with the study of the Armenian language, he should, in default of all better excitement, find a sort of stir and amusement in the task of contesting, inch by inch, every encroachment of expense, and endeavouring to suppress what he himself calls

> "That climax of all earthly ills,
> The inflammation of our weekly bills."

In truth, his constant recurrence to the praise of avarice in Don Juan, and the humorous zest with which he delights to dwell on it, shows how new-fangled, as well as how far from serious, was his adoption of this "good old-gentlemanly vice."[1] In the same spirit he had, a short time before my arrival at Venice, established a hoarding-box, with a slit in the lid, into which he occasionally put sequins, and, at stated periods, opened it to contemplate his treasures. His own ascetic style of living enabled him, as far as himself was concerned, to gratify this taste for economy in no ordinary degree, — his daily bill of fare, when the Margarita was his companion, consisting, I have been assured, of but four beccafichi, of which the Fornarina eat three, leaving even him hungry.

That his parsimony, however (if this new phasis of his ever-shifting character is to be called by such a name), was very far from being of that kind which Bacon condemns, as "withholding men from works of liberality," is apparent from all that is known of his munificence, at this very period, — some particulars of which, from a most authentic source, have just been cited, proving amply that while, for the indulgence of a whim, he kept one hand closed, he gave free course to his generous nature by dispensing lavishly from the other.[2] It should be remembered, too, that as long as money shall continue to be one of the great sources of power, so long will they who seek influence over their fellow-men attach value to it as an instrument; and the more lowly they are inclined to estimate the disinterestedness of the human heart, the more available and precious will they consider the talisman that gives such power over it. Hence, certainly, it is not among those who have thought highest of mankind that the disposition to avarice has most generally displayed itself. In Swift the love of money was strong and avowed; and to Voltaire the same propensity was also frequently imputed, — on about as sufficient grounds, perhaps, as to Lord Byron.

On the day preceding that of my departure from Venice, my noble host, on arriving from La Mira to dinner, told me, with all the glee of a schoolboy who had been just granted a holiday, that, as this was my last evening, the Contessa had given him leave to "make a night of it," and that accordingly he would not only accompany me to the opera, but we should sup together at some café (as in the old times) afterwards. Observing a volume in his gondola, with a number of paper marks between the leaves, I enquired of him what it was? — "Only a book," he answered, "from which I am trying to *crib*, as I do wherever I can[3]; — and that's the way I get the character of an original poet." On taking it up and looking into it, I exclaimed, "Ah, my old friend, Agathon!"[4] — "What!" he cried, archly, you have been beforehand with me there, have you?"

Though in imputing to himself premeditated plagiarism, he was, of course, but jesting, it was, I am inclined to think, his

[1] ["In short, I must not lead the life I did do,
The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er,
The copious use of claret is forbid too;
So for a good old-gentlemanly vice,
I think I must take up with avarice."
Don Juan, c. i. st. 216.]

[2] ["I will economize and do. It is not for myself; but I should like, God willing, to leave something to my relatives more than a mere name; and, besides that, to be able to do good to others to a greater extent." — *Lord Byron to Mr. Kinnaird.*]

[3] This will remind the reader of Molière's avowal in speaking of wit: — "C'est mon bien, et je le prends partout où je le trouve."

[4] The History of Agathon, by Wieland.

practice, when engaged in the composition of any work, to excite thus his vein by the perusal of others, on the same subject or plan, from which the slightest hint caught by his imagination, as he read, was sufficient to kindle there such a train of thought as, but for that spark, had never been awakened, and of which he himself soon forgot the source. In the present instance, the inspiration he sought was of no very elevating nature, — the anti-spiritual doctrines of the Sophist in this Romance[1] being what chiefly, I suspect, attracted his attention to its pages, as not unlikely to supply him with fresh argument and sarcasm for those depreciating views of human nature and its destiny, which he was now, with all the wantonness of unbounded genius, enforcing in Don Juan.

Of this work he was, at the time of my visit to him, writing the third canto, and before dinner, one day, read me two or three hundred lines of it; — beginning with the stanzas "Oh Wellington," &c. which at that time formed the opening of this third canto, but were afterwards reserved for the commencement of the ninth. My opinion of the poem, both as regarded its talent and its mischief, he had already been made acquainted with, from my having been one of those, — his Committee, as he called us, — to whom, at his own desire, the manuscript of the two first cantos had been submitted, and who, as the reader has seen, angered him not a little by deprecating the publication of it. In a letter which I, at that time, wrote to him on the subject, after praising the exquisite beauty of the scenes between Juan and Haidée, I ventured to say, "Is it not odd that the same licence which, in your early Satire[2], you blamed *me* for being guilty of on the borders of my twentieth year, you are now yourself (with infinitely greater power, and therefore infinitely greater mischief) indulging in *after* thirty!"

Though I now found him, in full defiance of such remonstrances, proceeding with this work, he had yet, as his own letters prove, been so far influenced by the general outcry against his poem, as to feel the zeal and zest with which he had commenced it considerably abated, — so much so, as to render, ultimately, in his own opinion, the third and fourth cantos much inferior in spirit to the two first. So sensitive, indeed, — in addition to his usual abundance of this quality, — did he, at length, grow on the subject, that when Mr. W. Bankes, who succeeded me, as his visitor, happened to tell him, one day, that he had heard a Mr. Saunders (or some such name), then resident at Venice, declare that, in his opinion, "Don Juan was all Grub Street," such an effect had this disparaging speech upon his mind, (though coming from a person who, as he himself would have it, was "nothing but a d—d salt-fish seller,") that, for some time after, by his own confession to Mr. Bankes, he could not bring himself to write another line of the poem; and, one morning, opening a drawer where the neglected manuscript lay, he said to his friend, "Look here — this is all Mr. Saunders's 'Grub Street.'"

To return, however, to the details of our last evening together at Venice. After a dinner with Mr. Scott at the Pellegrino, we all went, rather late, to the opera, where the principal part in the Baccanali di Roma was represented by a female singer, whose chief claim to reputation, according to Lord Byron, lay in her having *stilettoed* one of her favourite lovers. In the intervals between the singing he pointed out to me different persons among the audience, to whom celebrity of various sorts, but, for the most part, disreputable, attached; and of one lady who sat near us, he related an anecdote, which, whether new or old, may, as creditable to Venetian facetiousness, be worth, perhaps, repeating. This lady had, it seems, been pronounced by Napoleon the finest woman in Venice; but the Venetians, not quite agreeing with this opinion of the great man, contented themselves with calling her "La Bella *per Decréto*," — adding (as

[1] Between Wieland, the author of this Romance, and Lord Byron, may be observed some of those generic points of resemblance which it is so interesting to trace in the characters of men of genius. The German poet, it is said, never perused any work that made a strong impression upon him, without being stimulated to commence one, himself, on the same topic and plan; and in Lord Byron the imitative principle was almost equally active, — there being few of his poems that might not, in the same manner, be traced to the strong impulse given to his imagination by the perusal of some work that had just before interested him. In the history, too, of their lives and feelings, there was a strange and painful coincidence, — the revolution that took place in all Wieland's opinions, from the Platonism and romance of his youthful days, to the material and Epicurean doctrines that pervaded all his maturer works, being chiefly, it is supposed, brought about by the shock his heart had received from a disappointment of its affections in early life. Speaking of the illusion of this first passion, in one of his letters, he says, — "It is one for which no joys, no honours, no gifts of fortune, not even wisdom itself can afford an equivalent, and which, when it has once vanished, returns no more."

[2] [— "Little! young Catullus of his day,
As sweet, but as immoral, in his lay!
Griev'd to condemn, the muse must yet be just,
Nor spare melodious advocates of lust."
Works, p. 425.]

the Decrees always begin with the word "Considerando"), "Ma *senza* il Considerando."

From the opera, in pursuance of our agreement to "make a night of it," we betook ourselves to a sort of *cabaret* in the Place of St. Mark, and there, within a few yards of the Palace of the Doges, sat drinking hot brandy punch, and laughing over old times, till the clock of St. Mark struck the second hour of the morning. Lord Byron then took me in his gondola, and, the moon being in its fullest splendour, he made the gondoliers row us to such points of view as might enable me to see Venice, at that hour, to advantage. Nothing could be more solemnly beautiful than the whole scene around, and I had, for the first time, the Venice of my dreams before me. All those meaner details which so offend the eye by day were now softened down by the moonlight into a sort of visionary indistinctness; and the effect of that silent city of palaces, sleeping, as it were, upon the waters, in the bright stillness of the night, was such as could not but affect deeply even the least susceptible imagination. My companion saw that I was moved by it, and though familiar with the scene himself, seemed to give way, for the moment, to the same strain of feeling; and, as we exchanged a few remarks suggested by that wreck of human glory before us, his voice, habitually so cheerful, sunk into a tone of mournful sweetness, such as I had rarely before heard from him, and shall not easily forget. This mood, however, was but of the moment; some quick turn of ridicule soon carried him off into a totally different vein, and at about three o'clock in the morning, at the door of his own palazzo, we parted, laughing, as we had met;—an agreement having been first made that I should take an early dinner with him next day at his villa, on my road to Ferrara.

Having employed the morning of the following day in completing my round of sights at Venice, — taking care to visit specially "that picture by Giorgione," to which the poet's exclamation, "*such* a woman!"[1] will long continue to attract all votaries of beauty, — I took my departure from Venice, and, at about three o'clock, arrived at La Mira. I found my noble host waiting to receive me, and, in passing with him through the hall, saw his little Allegra, who, with her nursery maid, was standing there as if just returned from a walk. To the perverse fancy he had for falsifying his own character, and even imputing to himself faults the most alien to his nature, I have already frequently adverted, and had, on this occasion, a striking instance of it. After I had spoken a little in passing to the child, and made some remark on its beauty, he said to me, — "Have you any notion — but I suppose *you* have — of what they call the parental feeling? For myself, I have not the least." And yet, when that child died, in a year or two afterwards, he who now uttered this artificial speech was so overwhelmed by the event, that those who were about him at the time actually trembled for his reason!

A short time before dinner he left the room, and in a minute or two returned, carrying in his hand a white leather bag. "Look here," he said, holding it up — "this would be worth something to Murray, though *you*, I dare say, would not give sixpence for it." — "What is it?" I asked. — "My Life and Adventures," he answered. On hearing this, I raised my hands in a gesture of wonder. "It is not a thing," he continued, "that can be published during my lifetime, but you may have it — if you like — there, do whatever you please with it." In taking the bag, and thanking him most warmly, I added, "This will make a nice legacy for my little Tom, who shall astonish the latter days of the nineteenth century with it." He then added, "You may show it to any of our friends you think worthy of it:" — and this is nearly, word for word, the whole of what passed between us on the subject.

At dinner we were favoured with the presence of Madame Guiccioli, who was so obliging as to furnish me, at Lord Byron's suggestion, with a letter of introduction to her brother, Count Gamba, whom it was probable, they both thought, I should meet at Rome. This letter I never had an opportunity of presenting; and as it was left open for me to read, and was, the greater part of it, I have little doubt, dictated by my noble friend, I may venture, without impropriety, to give an extract from it here; — premising that the allusion to the "Castle," &c. refers to some tales respecting the cruelty of Lord Byron to his wife, which the young Count had heard, and, at this time, implicitly believed. After a few sentences of compliment to the bearer, the letter proceeds: — "He is on his way to see the won-

[1] "'Tis but a portrait of his son and wife,
And self; but *such* a woman! love in life!"
Beppo, stanza xii.

This seems, by the way, to be an incorrect description of the picture, as, according to Vasari and others, Giorgione never was married, and died young.

ders of Rome, and there is no one, I am sure, more qualified to enjoy them. I shall be gratified and obliged by your acting, as far as you can, as his guide. He is a friend of Lord Byron's, and much more accurately acquainted with his history than those who have related it to you. He will accordingly describe to you, if you ask him, *the shape, the dimensions*, and whatever else you may please to require, of *that Castle in which he keeps imprisoned a young and innocent wife*," &c. &c. My dear Pietro, whenever you feel inclined to laugh, do send two lines of answer to your sister, who loves and ever will love you with the greatest tenderness. — Teresa Guiccioli."[1]

After expressing his regret that I had not been able to prolong my stay at Venice, my noble friend said, "At least, I think, you might spare a day or two to go with me to Arquà. I should like," he continued, thoughtfully, "to visit that tomb[2] with you:" — then, breaking off into his usual gay tone, "a pair of poetical pilgrims — eh, Tom, what say you?" — That I should have declined this offer, and thus lost the opportunity of an excursion which would have been remembered as a bright dream, through all my after-life, is a circumstance I never can think of without wonder and self-reproach. But the main design on which I had then set my mind of reaching Rome, and, if possible, Naples, within the limited period which circumstances allowed, rendered me far less alive than I ought to have been to the preciousness of the episode thus offered to me.

When it was time for me to depart, he expressed his intention to accompany me a few miles; and, ordering his horses to follow, proceeded with me in the carriage as far as Strà, where for the last time — how little thinking it was to be the last! — I bade my kind and admirable friend farewell.

[1] "Egli viene per vedere le meraviglie di questa Città, e sono certa che nessuno meglio di lui saprebbe gustarle. Mi sarà grato che vi facciate sua guida come potrete, e voi poi me ne avrete obbligo. Egli è amico di Lord Byron — sà la sua storia assai più precisamente di quelli che a voi la raccontarono. Egli dunque vi racconterà se lo interrogherete *la forma, le dimensioni*, e tuttociò che vi piacerà del *Castello ove tiene imprigionata una giovane innocente sposa*, &c. &c. Mio caro Pietro, quando ti sei bene sfogato a ridere, allora rispondi due righe alla tua sorella, che t'ama e t' amerà sempre colla maggiore tenerezza."

[2] ["There is a tomb in Arquà; — rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius," &c.
"*Childe Harold*, c. iv. st. 30.]

LETTER 341. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"October 22. 1819.

"I am glad to hear of your return, but I do not know how to congratulate you — unless you think differently of Venice from what I think now, and you thought always. I am, besides, about to renew your troubles by requesting you to be judge between Mr. E * * * and myself in a small matter of imputed peculation and irregular accounts on the part of that phœnix of secretaries. As I knew that you had not parted friends, at the same time that *I* refused for my own part any judgment but *yours*, I offered him his choice of any person, the *least* scoundrel native to be found in Venice, as his own umpire; but he expressed himself so convinced of your impartiality, that he declined any but *you*. This is in his favour. — The paper within will explain to you the default in his accounts. You will hear his explanation, and decide if it so please you. I shall not appeal from the decision.

"As he complained that his salary was insufficient, I determined to have his accounts examined, and the enclosed was the result. It is all in black and white with documents, and I have despatched Fletcher to explain (or rather to perplex) the matter.

"I have had much civility and kindness from Mr. Dorville during your journey, and I thank him accordingly.

"Your letter reached me at your departure[3], and displeased me very much: — not that it might not be true in its statement and kind in its intention, but you have lived long enough to know how useless all such representations ever are and must be in cases where the passions are concerned. To reason with men in such a situation is like reasoning with a drunkard in his cups — the only answer you will get from him is, that he is sober, and you are drunk.

"Upon that subject we will (if you like) be silent. You might only say what would

[3] Mr. Hoppner, before his departure from Venice for Switzerland, had, with all the zeal of a true friend, written a letter to Lord Byron, entreating him "to leave Ravenna while yet he had a whole skin, and urging him not to risk the safety of a person he appeared so sincerely attached to — as well as his own — for the gratification of a momentary passion, which could only be a source of regret to both parties." In the same letter Mr. Hoppner informed him of some reports he had heard lately at Venice, which, though possibly, he said, unfounded, had much increased his anxiety respecting the consequences of the connection formed by him.

distress me without answering any purpose whatever; and I have too many obligations to you to answer you in the same style. So that you should recollect that you have also that advantage over me. I hope to see you soon.

"I suppose you know that they said at Venice, that I was arrested at Bologna as a *Carbonaro* — a story about as true as their usual conversation. Moore has been here— I lodged him in my house at Venice, and went to see him daily; but I could not at that time quit La Mira entirely. You and I were not very far from meeting in Switzerland. With my best respects to Mrs. Hoppner, believe me ever and truly, &c

"P. S. — Allegra is here in good health and spirits — I shall keep her with me till I go to England, which will perhaps be in the spring. It has just occurred to me that you may not perhaps like to undertake the office of judge between Mr. E. and your humble servant. — Of course, as Mr. Liston (the comedian, not the ambassador) says, '*it is all hoptional*[1];' but I have no other resource. I do not wish to find him a rascal, if it can be avoided, and would rather think him guilty of carelessness than cheating. The case is this — can I, or not, give him a character for *honesty?* — It is not my intention to continue him in my service."

LETTER 342. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"October 25. 1819.

"You need not have made any excuses about *the* letter: I never said but that you might, could, should, or would have reason. I merely described my own state of inaptitude to listen to it at that time, and in those circumstances. Besides, you did not speak from your *own* authority — but from what you said you had heard. Now my blood boils to hear an Italian speaking ill of another Italian, because, though they lie in particular, they speak truth in general by speaking ill at all; — and although they know that they are trying and wishing to lie, they do not succeed, merely because they can say nothing so bad of each other, that it *may* not, and must not be true, from the atrocity of their long debased national character.[2]

"With regard to E., you will perceive a most irregular, extravagant account, without proper documents to support it. He demanded an increase of salary, which made me suspect him; he supported an outrageous extravagance of expenditure, and did not like the dismission of the cook; he never complained of him — as in duty bound — at the time of his robberies. I can only say, that the house expense is now under *one half* of what it then was, as he himself admits. He charged for a comb *eighteen* francs, — the real price was *eight*. He charged a passage from Fusina for a person named Iambelli, who paid it *herself*, as she will prove if necessary. He fancies, or asserts himself, the victim of a domestic complot against him; — accounts are accounts — prices are prices; — let him make out a fair detail. *I* am not prejudiced against him — on the contrary, I supported him against the complaints of his wife, and of his former master, at a time when I could have crushed him like an earwig; and if he is a scoundrel, he is the greatest of scoundrels, an ungrateful one. The truth is, probably, that he thought I was leaving Venice, and determined to make the most of it. At present he keeps bringing in *account after account*, though he had always money in hand — as I believe you know my system was never to allow longer than a week's bills to run. Pray read him this letter — I desire nothing to be concealed against which he may defend himself.

"Pray how is your little boy? and how are you? — I shall be up in Venice very soon, and we will be bilious together. I hate the place and all that it inherits.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 343. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"October 28. 1819.

"I have to thank you for your letter, and your compliment to Don Juan. I said nothing to you about it, understanding that it is a sore subject with the moral reader, and has been the cause of a great row; but I am glad you like it. I will say nothing about the shipwreck, except that I hope you think it is as *nautical* and *technical* as verse could admit in the octave measure.

"The poem has *not sold well*, so Murray says — 'but the best judges, &c. say, &c.' so

[1] [In Kenney's farce of "Raising the Wind."]

[2] "This language" (says Mr. Hoppner, in some remarks upon the above letter) "is strong, but it was the language of prejudice; and he was rather apt thus to express the feelings of the moment, without troubling himself to consider how soon he might be induced to change them. He was at this time so sensitive on the subject of Madame Guiccioli that, merely because some persons had disapproved of her conduct, he declaimed in the above manner against the whole nation. I never" (continues Mr. Hoppner) "was partial to Venice; but disliked it almost from the first month of my residence there. Yet I experienced more kindness in that place than I ever met with in any country, and witnessed acts of generosity and disinterestedness such as rarely are met with elsewhere."

says that worthy man. I have never seen it in print. The third canto is in advance about one hundred stanzas; but the failure of the two first has weakened my *estro*, and it will neither be so good as the two former, nor completed, unless I get a little more *riscaldato* in its behalf. I understand the outcry was beyond every thing. — Pretty cant for people who read Tom Jones, and Roderick Random, and the Bath Guide, and Ariosto, and Dryden, and Pope — to say nothing of Little's Poems! Of course I refer to the *morality* of these works, and not to any pretension of mine to compete with them in any thing but decency. I hope yours is the Paris edition, and that you did not pay the London price. I have seen neither except in the newspapers.

"Pray make my respects to Mrs. H., and take care of your little boy. All my household have the fever and ague, except Fletcher, Allegra, and my*sen* (as we used to say in Nottinghamshire), and the horses, and Mutz, and Moretto. In the beginning of November, perhaps sooner, I expect to have the pleasure of seeing you. To-day I got drenched by a thunder-storm, and my horse and groom too, and his horse all bemired up to the middle in a cross-road. It was summer at noon, and at five we were bewintered; but the lightning was sent perhaps to let us know that the summer was not yet over. It is queer weather for the 27th October.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 344. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, October 29. 1819.

"Yours of the 15th came yesterday. I am sorry that you do not mention a large letter addressed to *your care* for Lady Byron, from me, at Bologna, two months ago. Pray tell me, was this letter received and forwarded?

"You say nothing of the vice-consulate for the Ravenna patrician, from which it is to be inferred that the thing will not be done.

"I had written about a hundred stanzas of a *third* canto to Don Juan, but the reception of the two first is no encouragement to you nor me to proceed.

"I had also written about 600 lines of a poem, the Vision (or Prophecy) of Dante, the subject a view of Italy in the ages down to the present — supposing Dante to speak in his own person, previous to his death, and embracing all topics in the way of prophecy, like Lycophron's Cassandra; but this and the other are both at a stand-still for the present.

"I gave Moore, who is gone to Rome, my Life in MS., in seventy-eight folio sheets, brought down to 1816. But this I put into his hands for *his* care, as he has some other MSS. of mine — a Journal kept in 1814, &c. Neither are for publication during my life; but when I am cold you may do what you please. In the meantime, if you like to read them you may, and show them to any body you like — I care not.

"The Life is *Memoranda*, and not *Confessions*. I have left out all my *loves* (except in a general way), and many other of the most important things (because I must not compromise other people), so that it is like the play of Hamlet — 'the part of Hamlet omitted by particular desire.' But you will find many opinions, and some fun, with a detailed account of my marriage, and its consequences, as true as a party concerned can make such account, for I suppose we are all prejudiced.

"I have never read over this Life since it was written, so that I know not exactly what it may repeat or contain. Moore and I passed some merry days together.[1]

"I probably must return for business, or in my way to America. Pray, did you get a letter for Hobhouse, who will have told you the contents? I understand that the Venezuelan commissioners had orders to treat with emigrants; now I want to go there. I should not make a bad South American planter, and I should take my natural daughter, Allegra, with me, and settle. I wrote, at length, to Hobhouse, to get information from Perry, who, I suppose, is the best topographer and trumpeter of the new republicans. Pray write.

"Yours ever,

"B.

"P. S. — Moore and I did nothing but laugh. He will tell you of 'my whereabouts,' and all my proceedings at this present; they are as usual. You should not let those fellows publish false 'Don Juans;' but do not put *my name*, because I mean to cut Roberts up like a gourd, in the preface, if I continue the poem."

[1] [In a letter of the same date Lord Byron says: "So far from 'seducing me to England,' as you suppose, the account Moore gave of me and mine was of any thing but a nature to make me wish to return. It is not such opinions of the public that would weigh with me one way or the other; but I think they should weigh with others of my friends before they ask me to return to a place for which I have no great inclination."]

LETTER 345. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"October 29. 1819.

"The Ferrara story is of a piece with all the rest of the Venetian manufacture, — you may judge. I only changed horses there since I wrote to you, after my visit in June last. '*Convent*,' and '*carry off*,' quotha! and '*girl*.' I should like to know *who* has been carried off, except poor dear *me*. I have been more ravished myself than anybody since the Trojan war; but as to the arrest and its causes, one is as true as the other, and I can account for the invention of neither. I suppose it is some confusion of the tale of the Fornarina and of M^e^. Guiccioli, and half a dozen more; but it is useless to unravel the web, when one has only to brush it away. I shall settle with Master E., who looks very blue at your *in-decision*, and swears that he is the best arithmetician in Europe; and so I think also, for he makes out two and two to be five.

"You may see me next week. I have a horse or two more (five in all), and I shall repossess myself of Lido, and I will rise earlier, and we will go and shake our livers over the beach, as heretofore, if you like — and we will make the Adriatic roar again with our hatred of that now empty oyster-shell, without its pearl, the city of Venice.

"Murray sent me a letter yesterday: the impostors have published *two* new *third* cantos of *Don Juan*: — the devil take the impudence of some blackguard bookseller or other there*for!* Perhaps I did not make myself understood; he told me the sale had been great, 1200 out of 1500 quarto, I believe (which is nothing after selling 13,000 of the Corsair in one day); but that the 'best judges,' &c. had said it was very fine, and clever, and particularly good English, and poetry, and all those consolatory things, which are not, however, worth a single copy to a bookseller: and as to the author, of course I am in a d—ned passion at the bad taste of the times, and swear there is nothing like posterity, who, of course, must know more of the matter than their grandfathers. There has been an eleventh commandment to the women not to read it, and, what is still more extraordinary, they seem not to have broken it. But that can be of little import to them, poor things, for the reading or non-reading a book will never * * * *.

"Count G. comes to Venice next week, and I am requested to consign his wife to him, which shall be done. What you say of the long evenings at the Mira, or Venice, reminds me of what Curran said to Moore: — 'So I hear you have married a pretty woman, and a very good creature, too, — an excellent creature. Pray — um! *how do you pass your evenings?*' It is a devil of a question that, and perhaps as easy to answer with a wife as with a mistress.

"If you go to Milan, pray leave at least a *Vice-Consul* — the only vice that will ever be wanting in Venice. D'Orville is a good fellow. But you shall go to England in the spring with me, and plant Mrs. Hoppner at Berne with her relations for a few months. I wish you had been here (at Venice, I mean, not the Mira) when Moore was here — we were very merry and tipsy. He *hated* Venice, by the way, and swore it was a sad place.[1]

"So Madame Albrizzi's death is in danger — poor woman![2] Moore told me that at Geneva they had made a devil of a story of the Fornaretta: — 'Young lady seduced! — subsequent abandonment! — leap into the Grand Canal!' — and her being in the 'hospital of *fous* in consequence!' I should like to know who was nearest being made '*fou*,' and be d—d to them! Don't you think me in the interesting character of a very ill-used gentleman? I hope your little boy is well. Allegrina is flourishing like a promegranate blossom. "Yours, &c."

LETTER 346. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, November 8. 1819.

"Mr. Hoppner has lent me a copy of 'Don Juan,' Paris edition, which he tells me is read in Switzerland by clergymen and ladies with considerable approbation. In the second canto, you must alter the 49th stanza to

> "'Twas twilight, and the sunless day went down
> Over the waste of waters, like a veil
> Which if withdrawn would but disclose the frown
> Of one whose hate is mask'd but to assail:
> Thus to their hopeless eyes the night was shown,
> And grimly darkled o'er their faces pale
> And the dim desolate deep; twelve days had Fear
> Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

"I have been ill these eight days with a tertian fever, caught in the country on horseback in a thunder-storm. Yesterday I had the fourth attack: the two last were very smart, the first day as well as the last being preceded by vomiting. It is the fever of the place and the season. I feel weakened, but not unwell, in the intervals, except headach and lassitude.

[1] I beg to say that this report of my opinion of Venice is coloured somewhat too deeply by the feelings of the reporter.

[2] [See *antè*, p. 413.]

"Count Guiccioli has arrived in Venice, and has presented his spouse (who had preceded him two months for her health and the prescriptions of Dr. Aglietti) with a paper of conditions, regulations of hours and conduct, and morals, &c. &c. which he insists on her accepting, and she persists in refusing. I am expressly, it should seem, excluded by this treaty, as an indispensable preliminary; so that they are in high discussion, and what the result may be I know not, particularly as they are consulting friends.

"To-night, as Countess Guiccioli observed me poring over 'Don Juan,' she stumbled by mere chance on the 137th stanza of the first canto, and asked me what it meant. I told her, 'Nothing — but "your husband is coming."'[1] As I said this in Italian, with some emphasis, she started up in a fright, and said, '*Oh my God, is* he *coming?*' thinking it was *her own*, who either was or ought to have been at the theatre. You may suppose we laughed when she found out the mistake. You will be amused, as I was; — it happened not three hours ago.

"I wrote to you last week, but have added nothing to the third canto since my fever, nor to 'The Prophecy of Dante.' Of the former there are about 110 octaves done; of the latter about 500 lines — perhaps more. Moore saw the third Juan, as far as it then went. I do not know if my fever will let me go on with either, and the tertian lasts, they say, a good while. I had it in Malta on my way home, and the malaria fever in Greece the year before that. The Venetian is not very fierce, but I was delirious one of the nights with it, for an hour or two, and, on my senses coming back, found Fletcher sobbing on one side of the bed, and La Contessa Guiccioli[2] weeping on the other; so that I had no want of attendance. I have not yet taken any physician, because, though I think they may relieve in chronic disorders, such as gout and the like, &c. &c. &c. (though they can't cure them) — just as surgeons are necessary to set bones and tend wounds — yet I think fevers quite out of their reach, and remediable only by diet and nature.

"I don't like the taste of bark, but I suppose that I must take it soon.

"Tell Rose that somebody at Milan (an Austrian, Mr. Hoppner says) is answering his book. William Bankes is in quarantine at Trieste. I have not lately heard from you. Excuse this paper: it is long paper shortened for the occasion. What folly is this of Carlile's trial?[1] why let him have the honours of a martyr? it will only advertise the books in question.

"Yours, &c.

"B.

"P. S. — As I tell you that the Guiccioli business is on the eve of exploding in one way or the other, I will just add that, without attempting to influence the decision of the Contessa, a good deal depends upon it. If she and her husband make it up, you will, perhaps, see me in England sooner than you expect. If not, I shall retire with her to France or America, change my name, and lead a quiet provincial life. All this may seem odd, but I have got the poor girl into a scrape; and as neither her birth, nor her rank, nor her connections by birth or marriage are inferior to my own, I am in honour bound to support her through. Besides, she is a very pretty woman — ask Moore — and not yet one and twenty.

"If she gets over this and I get over my tertian, I will, perhaps, look in at Albemarle Street, some of these days, *en passant* to Bolivar."

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[1] ["For God's sake, madam — madam — here's my master."]

[2] The following curious particulars of his delirium are given by Madame Guiccioli: — "At the beginning of winter Count Guiccioli came from Ravenna to fetch me. When he arrived, Lord Byron was ill of a fever, occasioned by his having got wet through; — a violent storm having surprised him while taking his usual exercise on horseback. He had been delirious the whole night, and I had watched continually by his bedside. During his delirium he composed a good many verses, and ordered his servant to write them down from his dictation. The rhythm of these verses was quite correct, and the poetry itself had no appearance of being the work of a delirious mind. He preserved them for some time after he got well, and then burned them."— "Sul cominciare dell' inverno il Conte Guiccioli venne a prendermi per ricondurmi a Ravenna. Quando egli giunse Ld. Byron era ammalato di febbri prese per essersi bagnato avendolo sorpreso un forte temporale mentre faceva l' usato suo esercizio a cavallo. Egli aveva delirato tutta la notte, ed io aveva sempre vegliato presso al suo letto. Nel suo delirio egli compose molti versi che ordinò al suo domestico di scrivere sotto la sua dittatura. La misura dei versi era esatissima, e la poesia pure non pareva opera di una mente in delirio. Egli la conservò lungo tempo dopo restabilito — poi l' abbrucciò."

I have been informed, too, that, during his ravings at this time, he was constantly haunted by the idea of his mother-in-law, — taking every one that came near him for her, and reproaching those about him for letting her enter his room.

[1] [For republishing "Paine's Age of Reason." This trial occupied three days; the greater part of the time being consumed in the defence. Carlile was sentenced to pay a fine of fifteen hundred pounds, and be imprisoned three years in Dorchester gaol.]

LETTET 347. TO MR. BANKES.

"Venice, November 20. 1819.

"A tertian ague, which has troubled me for some time, and the indisposition of my daughter, have prevented me from replying before to your welcome letter. I have not been ignorant of your progress nor of your discoveries, and I trust that you are no worse in health from your labours. You may rely upon finding every body in England eager to reap the fruits of them; and as you have done more than other men, I hope you will not limit yourself to saying less than may do justice to the talents and time you have bestowed on your perilous researches. The first sentence of my letter will have explained to you why I cannot join you at Trieste. I was on the point of setting out for England (before I knew of your arrival) when my child's illness has made her and me dependent on a Venetian Proto-Medico.

"It is now seven years since you and I met;— which time you have employed better for others and more honourably for yourself than I have done.

"In England you will find considerable changes, public and private,—you will see some of our old college contemporaries turned into lords of the Treasury, Admiralty, and the like,—others become reformers and orators,—many settled in life, as it is called,—and others settled in death; among the latter, (by the way, not our fellow collegians,) Sheridan, Curran, Lady Melbourne, Monk Lewis, Frederick Douglas[1], &c. &c. &c.; but you will still find Mr. * * living and all his family, as also * * * * *.

"Should you come up this way, and I am still here, you need not be assured how glad I shall be to see you; I long to hear some part from you, of that which I expect in no long time to *see*. At length you have had better fortune than any traveller of equal enterprise (except Humbolt), in returning safe; and after the fate of the Brownes, and the Parkes, and the Burckhardts, it is hardly less surprise than satisfaction to get you back again.

"Believe me ever

"And very affectionately yours,

"BYRON."

LETTER 348. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, December 4. 1819.

"You may do as you please, but you are about a hopeless experiment. Eldon will decide against you, were it only that my name is in the record. You will also recollect that if the publication is pronounced against, on the grounds you mention, as *indecent and blasphemous*, that *I* lose all right in my daughter's *guardianship* and *education*, in short, all paternal authority, and every thing concerning her, except * * * * * * * * *. It was so decided in Shelley's case, because he had written Queen Mab, &c. &c. However, you can ask the lawyers, and do as you like: I do not inhibit you trying the question; I merely state one of the consequences to me. With regard to the copyright, it is hard that you should pay for a nonentity: I will therefore refund it, which I can very well do, not having spent it, nor begun upon it; and so we will be quits on that score. It lies at my banker's.

"Of the Chancellor's law I am no judge; but take up Tom Jones, and read his Mrs. Waters and Molly Seagrim; or Prior's Hans Carvel and Paulo Purganti: Smollett's Roderick Random, the chapter of Lord Strutwell, and many others; Peregrine Pickle, the scene of the beggar girl; Johnson's *London*, for coarse expressions; for instance, the words '* *,' and '* *;' Anstey's Bath Guide[2], the 'Hearken, Lady

[1] [The Hon. Frederick Sylvester North Douglas, only son of Lord Glenbervie. He died in October 1819, in his twenty-ninth year. In 1813, he published an "Essay on Certain Points of Resemblance between the Ancient and Modern Greeks;" of which a favourable notice will be found in the Quarterly Review for January 1814. "To Mr. Douglas and Mr. Hobhouse," says the reviewer, "the country is indebted for many valuable facts, and many intelligent observations illustrative of the present state of the inhabitants of Greece, and it may be hoped that the example of those gentlemen will not be long without followers. That it is only by a steady perseverance in pursuits of this kind, that the Greeks can arrive at their favourite object of political emancipation. 'Weak and untutored minds,' says Mr. Douglas, 'are seldom able to support with steadiness the sudden glare of reason: the events of the French revolution may inform us that a gradual progression is necessary, that the seeds of rational liberty will never prosper in a soil not prepared by proper cultivation to receive them. The Greeks have commenced, however, with moderation and wisdom; and if the wild fancies of politicians and enthusiasts do not hurry them out of the course in which they are advancing with cautious but accelerated steps, another age may witness the glorious period when the torch of knowledge shall conduct them to the enjoyment of happiness and freedom.'"]

[2] ["There is a new thing published, that will make you split your cheeks with laughing. It is called the New Bath Guide. It stole into the world, and for a fortnight no soul looked into it, concluding its name was its true name. No such thing. It is a set of letters in verse, describing the life at Bath, and incidentally every thing else; but so much wit, so much humour, fun and poetry, never met together before. I can say it by heart, and if I had time would write it you down; for it is not

Betty, hearken;' — take up, in short, Pope, Prior, Congreve, Dryden, Fielding, Smollett, and let the counsel select passages, and what becomes of *their* copyright, if his Wat Tyler decision is to pass into a precedent? I have nothing more to say: you must judge for yourselves.

I wrote to you some time ago. I have had a tertian ague; my daughter Allegra has been ill also, and I have been almost obliged to run away with a married woman; but with some difficulty, and many internal struggles, I reconciled the lady with her lord, and cured the fever of the child with bark, and my own with cold water. I think of setting out for England by the Tyrol in a few days, so that I could wish you to direct your next letter to Calais. Excuse my writing in great haste and late in the morning, or night, whichever you please to call it. The third canto of 'Don Juan' is completed, in about two hundred stanzas; very decent, I believe, but do not know, and it is useless to discuss until it be ascertained if it may or may not be a property.

"My present determination to quit Italy was unlooked for; but I have explained the reasons in letters to my sister and Douglas Kinnaird, a week or two ago. My progress will depend upon the snows of the Tyrol, and the health of my child, who is at present quite recovered; but I hope to get on well, and am

"Yours ever and truly.

"P. S. — Many thanks for your letters, to which you are not to consider this as an answer, but as an acknowledgment."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1819—1820.

VENICE. — CORRESPONDENCE WITH MADAME GUICCIOLI. — ILLNESS OF THE COUNTESS. — PREPARATIONS FOR A RETURN TO ENGLAND. — HASTY DEPARTURE FOR RAVENNA. — RESIDENCE IN THE PALAZZO GUICCIOLI. — ANECDOTES. — EPIGRAMS. — LETTERS TO HOPPNER, MOORE, MURRAY, AND WILLIAM BANKES. — STATE OF MANNERS AND MORALS IN ITALY. — LETTER FROM DALLAS. — COMPLETION OF THE FOURTH CANTO OF DON JUAN, THE PROPHECY OF DANTE, AND THE TRANSLATIONS OF PULCI'S MORGANTE AND DANTE'S FRANCESCA DI RIMINI.

THE struggle which, at the time of my visit to him, I had found Lord Byron so well disposed to make towards averting, as far as now lay in his power, some of the mischievous consequences which, both to the object of his attachment and himself, were likely to result from their connection, had been brought, as the foregoing letters show, to a crisis soon after I left him. The Count Guiccioli, on his arrival at Venice, insisted, as we have seen, that his lady should return with him; and, after some conjugal negotiations, in which Lord Byron does not appear to have interfered, the young Contessa consented reluctantly to accompany her lord to Ravenna, it being first covenanted that, in future, all communication between her and her lover should cease.

"In a few days after this," says Mr. Hoppner, in some notices of his noble friend with which he has favoured me, "he returned to Venice, very much out of spirits, owing to Madame Guiccioli's departure, and out of humour with every body and every thing around him. We resumed our rides at the Lido; and I did my best not only to raise his spirits, but to make him forget his absent mistress, and to keep him to his purpose of returning to England. He went into no society; and having no longer any relish for his former occupation, his time, when he was not writing, hung heavy enough on hand."

The promise given by the lovers not to correspond was, as all parties must have foreseen, soon violated; and the letters Lord Byron addressed to the lady, at this time, though written in a language not his own, are rendered frequently even eloquent by the mere force of the feeling that governed him — a feeling which could not have owed its fuel to fancy alone, since, now that reality had been so long substituted, it still burned on. From one of these letters, dated November 25th, I shall so far presume upon the discretionary power vested in me, as to lay a short extract or two before the reader — not merely as matters of curiosity, but on account of the strong evidence they afford of the struggle between passion and a sense of right that now agitated him.

yet reprinted, and not one to be had." — *Horace Walpole to G. Montague*, June 20. 1766.

"Have you read the New Bath Guide? It is the only thing in fashion, and is a new and original kind of humour Miss Prue's conversation I doubt you will paste down, as a certain Yorkshire baronet did before he carried it to his daughters; yet I remember you all read Crazy Tales without pasting." — *Gray to Dr. Wharton*, Aug. 26. 1766.]

"You are," he says, "and ever will be, my first thought. But, at this moment, I am in a state most dreadful, not knowing which way to decide; — on the one hand, fearing that I should compromise you for ever, by my return to Ravenna and the consequences of such a step, and, on the other, dreading that I shall lose both you and myself, and all that I have ever known or tasted of happiness, by never seeing you more. I pray of you, I implore you, to be comforted, and to believe that I cannot cease to love you but with my life." [1] In another part he says, "I go to save you, and leave a country insupportable to me without you. Your letters to F** and myself do wrong to my motives — but you will yet see your injustice. It is not enough that I must leave you — from motives of which ere long you will be convinced — it is not enough that I must fly from Italy, with a heart deeply wounded, after having passed all my days in solitude since your departure, sick both in body and mind — but I must also have to endure your reproaches without answering and without deserving them. Farewell! in that one word is comprised the death of my happiness." [2]

He had now arranged every thing for his departure for England, and had even fixed the day, when accounts reached him from Ravenna that the Contessa was alarmingly ill; — her sorrow at their separation having so much preyed upon her mind, that even her own family, fearful of the consequences, had withdrawn all opposition to her wishes, and now, with the sanction of Count Guiccioli himself, entreated her lover to hasten to Ravenna. What was he, in this dilemma, to do? Already had he announced his coming to different friends in England, and every dictate, he felt, of prudence and manly fortitude urged his departure. While thus balancing between duty and inclination, the day appointed for his setting out arrived; and the following picture, from the life, of his irresolution on the occasion, is from a letter written by a female friend of Madame Guiccioli, who was present at the scene: — "He was ready dressed for the journey, his gloves and cap on, and even his little cane in his hand. Nothing was now waited for but his coming down stairs, — his boxes being already all on board the gondola. At this moment, my Lord, by way of pretext, declares, that if it should strike one o'clock before every thing was in order (his arms being the only thing not yet quite ready) he would not go that day. The hour strikes, and he remains!" [3]

The writer adds, "it is evident he has not the heart to go;" and the result proved that she had not judged him wrongly. The very next day's tidings from Ravenna decided his fate, and he himself, in a letter to the Contessa, thus announces the triumph which she had achieved. "F*** will already have told you, *with her accustomed sublimity*, that Love has gained the victory. I could not summon up resolution enough to leave the country where you are, without, at least, once more seeing you. On *yourself*, perhaps, it will depend, whether I ever again shall leave you. Of the rest we shall speak when we meet. You ought, by this time, to know which is most conducive to your welfare, my presence or my absence. For myself, I am a citizen of the world — all countries are alike to me. You have ever been, since our first acquaintance, *the sole object of my thoughts*. My opinion was, that the best course I could adopt, both for your peace and that of all your family, would have been to depart and go far, *far* away from you; — since to have been near and not approach you would have been, for me, impossible. You have however decided that I am to return to Ravenna. I shall accordingly return — and shall *do* — and *be* all that you wish. I cannot say more." [4]

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[1] "Tu sei, e sarai sempre mio primo pensier. Ma in questo momento sono in un' stato orribile non sapendo cosa decidere; — temendo, da una parte, comprometterti in eterno col mio ritorno a Ravenna, e colle sue conseguenze; e, dal' altra perderti, e me stesso, e tutto quel che ho conosciuto o gustato di felicità, nel non vederti più. Ti prego, ti supplico calmarti, e credere che non posso cessare ad amarti che colla vita."

[2] "Io parto, per *salvarti*, e lascio un paese divenuto insopportabile senza di te. Le tue lettere alla F**, ed anche a me stesso fanno torto ai miei motivi; ma col tempo vedrai la tua ingiustizia. Tu parli del dolor—io lo sento, ma mi mancano le parole. Non basta lasciarti per dei motivi dei quali tu eri persuasa (non molto tempo fa) — non basta partire dall' Italia col cuore lacerato, dopo aver passato tutti i giorni dopo la tua partenza nella solitudine, ammalato di corpo e di anima — ma ho anche a sopportare i tuoi rimproveri, senza replicarti, e senza meritarli. Addio — in quella parola è compresa la morte *di* mia felicita."

The close of this last sentence exhibits one of the very few instances of incorrectness that Lord Byron falls into in these letters; — the proper construction being "*della* mia felicita."

[3] "Egli era tutto vestito di viaggio coi guanti fra le mani, col suo bonnet, e persino colla piceola sua canna; non altro aspettavasi che egli scendesse le scale, tutti i bauli erano in barca. Milord fa la pretesta che se suona un ora dopo il mezzodi e che non sia ogni cosa all' ordine (poichè le armi sole non erano in pronto) egli non partirebbe più per quel giorno. L'ora suona ed egli resta."

[4] "La F** ti avra detta, *colla sua solita sublimità*, che l'Amor ha vinto. Io non ho potuto trovare forza di anima per lasciare il paese dove tu sei, senza vederti almeno un' altra volta: — forse dipenderà da *te* se mai

On quitting Venice he took leave of Mr. Hoppner in a short but cordial letter, which I cannot better introduce than by prefixing to it the few words of comment with which this excellent friend of the noble poet has himself accompanied it: — "I need not say with what painful feeling I witnessed the departure of a person who, from the first day of our acquaintance, had treated me with unvaried kindness, reposing a confidence in me which it was beyond the power of my utmost efforts to deserve; admitting me to an intimacy which I had no right to claim, and listening with patience, and the greatest good temper, to the remonstrances I ventured to make upon his conduct."

LETTER 349. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"My dear Hoppner,

"Partings are but bitter work at best, so that I shall not venture on a second with you. Pray make my respects to Mrs. Hoppner, and assure her of my unalterable reverence for the singular goodness of her disposition, which is not without its reward even in this world — for those who are no great believers in human virtues would discover enough in her to give them a better opinion of their fellow-creatures and — what is still more difficult — of themselves, as being of the same species, however inferior in approaching its nobler models. Make, too, what excuses you can for my omission of the ceremony of leave-taking. If we all meet again, I will make my humblest apology; if not, recollect that I wished you all well; and, if you can, forget that I have given you a great deal of trouble.

"Yours, &c. &c."

LETTER 350. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Venice, December 10. 1819.

"Since I last wrote, I have changed my mind, and shall not come to England. The more I contemplate, the more I dislike the place and the prospect. You may, therefore, address to me as usual *here*, though I mean to go to another city. I have finished the third canto of Don Juan, but the things I have read and heard discourage all further publication — at least for the present. You may try the copy question, but you'll lose it: the cry is up, and cant is up. I should have no objection to return the price of the copyright, and have written to Mr. Kinnaird by this post on the subject. Talk with him.

"I have not the patience, nor do I feel interest enough in the question, to contend with the fellows in their own slang; but I perceive Mr. Blackwood's Magazine and one or two others of your missives have been hyperbolical in their praise, and diabolical in their abuse. I like and admire Wilson, and *he* should not have indulged himself in such outrageous licence.[1] It is overdone and defeats itself. What would he say to the grossness without passion and the misanthropy without feeling of Gulliver's Travels? — When he talks of Lady Byron's business, he talks of what he knows nothing about; and you may tell him that no one can more desire a public investigation of that affair than I do.

"I sent home by Moore (*for* Moore only, who has my Journal) my Memoir written up to 1816, and I gave him leave to show it to whom he pleased, but *not to publish*, on any account. You may read it, and you may let Wilson read it, if he likes — not for his *public* opinion, but his private; for I like the man, and care very little about his Magazine. And I could wish Lady B. herself to read it, that she may have it in her power to mark any thing mistaken or mis-stated; as it will probably appear after my extinction, and it would be but fair she should see it, — that is to say, herself willing.

"Perhaps I may take a journey to you in the spring; but I *have* been ill, and *am* indolent and indecisive, because few things interest me. These fellows first abused me for being gloomy, and now they are wroth that I am, or attempted to be, facetious. I have got such a cold and headach that I can hardly see what I scrawl: — the winters here are as sharp as needles. Some time ago, I wrote to you rather fully about my Italian affairs; at present I can say no more, except that you shall hear further by and by.

"Your Blackwood accuses me of treating

ti lascio più. Per il resto parleremo. Tu dovresti adesso sapere cosa sarà più convenevole al tuo ben essere la mia presenza o la mia lontananza. Io sono cittadino del mondo — tutti i paesi sono eguali per me. Tu sei stata sempre (dopo che ci siamo conosciuti) *l'unico oggetto di miei* pensieri. Credeva che il miglior partito per la pace tua e la pace di tua famiglia fosse il mio partire, e andare ben *lontano;* poichè stare vicino e *non* avvicinarti sarebbe per me impossibile. Ma tu hai deciso che io debbo ritornare a Ravenna — tornaro — e farò — e sarò ciò che tu vuoi. Non posso dirti di più."

[1] This is one of the many mistakes into which his distance from the scene of literary operations led him. The gentleman, to whom the hostile article in the Magazine is here attributed, has never, either then or since, written upon the subject of the noble poet's character or genius, without giving vent to a feeling of admiration as enthusiastic as it is always eloquently and powerfully expressed.

women harshly: it may be so, but I have been their martyr; my whole life has been sacrificed *to* them and *by* them. I mean to leave Venice in a few days, but you will address your letters *here* as usual. When I fix elsewhere, you shall know.

"Yours, &c."[1]

Soon after this letter to Mr. Murray he set out for Ravenna, from which place we shall find his correspondence for the next year and a half dated. For a short time after his arrival, he took up his residence at an inn; but the Count Guiccioli having allowed him to hire a suite of apartments in the Palazzo Guiccioli itself, he was once more lodged under the same roof with the Countess Guiccioli.

LETTER 351. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, Dec. 31. 1819.

"I have been here this week, and was obliged to put on my armour and go the night after my arrival to the Marquis Cavalli's, where there were between two and three hundred of the best company I have seen in Italy, — more beauty, more youth, and more diamonds among the women than have been seen these fifty years in the Sea-Sodom.[2] I never saw such a difference between two places of the same latitude, (or platitude, it is all one,) — music, dancing, and play, all in the same *salle*. The G.'s object appeared to be to parade her foreign friend as much as possible, and, faith, if she seemed to glory in so doing, it was not for me to be ashamed of it. Nobody seemed surprised; — all the women, on the contrary, were, as it were, delighted with the excellent example. The vice-legate, and all the other vices, were as polite as could be; — and I, who had acted on the reserve, was fairly obliged to take the lady under my arm, and look as much like a cicisbeo as I could on so short a notice, — to say nothing of the embarrassment of a cocked hat and sword, much more formidable to me than ever it will be to the enemy.

"I write in great haste — do you answer as hastily. I can understand nothing of all this; but it seems as if the G. had been presumed to be *planted*, and was determined to show that she was not, — *plantation*, in this hemisphere, being the greatest moral misfortune. But this is mere conjecture, for I know nothing about it — except that every body are very kind to her, and not discourteous to me. Fathers, and all relations, quite agreeable.

"Yours ever,

"B.

"P. S. — Best respects to Mrs. H.

"I would send the *compliments* of the season; but the season itself is so complimentary with snow and rain that I wait for sunshine."

LETTER 352. TO MR. MOORE.

"January 2. 1820.

"My dear Moore,

"'To-day it is my wedding day;
And all the folks would stare,
If wife should dine at Edmonton,
And I should dine at Ware.'

"Or *thus*:

"Here's a happy new year! but with reason,
I beg you'll permit me to say —
Wish me *many* returns of the *season*,
But as *few* as you please of the *day*.

"My this present writing is to direct you that, *if she chooses*, she may see the MS. Memoir in your possession. I wish her to have fair play, in all cases, even though it will not be published till after my decease. For this purpose, it were but just that Lady B. should know what is there said of her and hers, that she may have full power to remark on or respond to any part or parts, as may seem fitting to herself. This is fair dealing, I presume, in all events.

"To change the subject, are you in England? I send you an epitaph for Castlereagh. * * * * * Another for Pitt: —

"With death doom'd to grapple
Beneath this cold slab, he
Who lied in the Chapel
Now lies in the Abbey.

"The gods seem to have made me poetical this day: —

"In digging up your bones, Tom Paine,
Will. Cobbett has done well:
You visit him on earth again,
He'll visit you in hell.

Or,

"You come to him on earth again,
He 'll go with you to hell.

[1] [P. S. — Pray let my sister be informed that I am not coming as I intended. I have not the courage to tell her so myself, at least as yet. But I will soon, with the reasons. Pray tell her so.—*MS.*]

[2] "Gehenna of the waters! thou Sea-Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!"
Marino Faliero, act v. sc. 3.]

"Pray let not these versiculi go forth with *my* name, except among the initiated, because my friend H. has foamed into a reformer, and, I greatly fear, will subside into Newgate[1]; since the Honourable House, according to Galignani's Reports of Parliamentary Debates, are menacing a prosecution to a pamphlet of his. I shall be very sorry to hear of any thing but good for him, particularly in these miserable squabbles; but these are the natural effects of taking a part in them.

"For my own part, I had a sad scene since you went. Count Gu. came for his wife, and *none* of those consequences which Scott prophesied ensued. There was no damages, as in England, and so Scott lost his wager. But there was a great scene, for she would not, at first, go back with him — at least, she *did* go back with him; but he insisted, reasonably enough, that all communication should be broken off between her and me. So, finding Italy very dull, and having a fever tertian, I packed up my valise, and prepared to cross the Alps; but my daughter fell ill, and detained me.

"After her arrival at Ravenna, the Guiccioli fell ill again too; and at last, her father (who had, all along, opposed the liaison most violently till now) wrote to me to say that she was in such a state that *he* begged me to come and see her, — and that her husband had acquiesced, in consequence of her relapse, and that *he* (her father) would guarantee all this, and that there would be no further scenes in consequence between them, and that I should not be compromised in any way. I set out soon after, and have been here ever since. I found her a good deal altered, but getting better: — *all* this comes of reading Corinna.

"The Carnival is about to begin, and I saw about two or three hundred people at the Marquis Cavalli's the other evening, with as much youth, beauty, and diamonds among the women, as ever averaged in the like number. My appearance in waiting on the Guiccioli was considered as a thing of course. The Marquis is her uncle, and naturally considered me as her relation.

"The paper is out, and so is the letter. Pray write. Address to Venice, whence the letters will be forwarded. Yours, &c.

"B."

[1] [Lord Byron's fears were well founded. When the above was written, his friend Mr. Hobhouse was actually in Newgate. Mr. Stuart Wortley (now Lord Wharncliffe) having, on the 10th of December called the attention of the House of Commons to certain passages contained in a pamphlet entitled "A Trifling Mistake in Thomas Lord Erskine's recent Preface," the said pamphlet was voted a breach of privilege, and the publisher was ordered to attend at the bar; but Mr. (now the Right Honourable) Edward Ellice having stated, that he was authorised to give up the name of the writer, Mr. Hobhouse was committed to Newgate, and remained there till the dissolution in February. At the ensuing election, he was chosen one of the representatives for Westminster.]

LETTER 353. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, January 20. 1820.

"I have not decided any thing about remaining at Ravenna. I may stay a day, a week, a year, all my life; but all this depends upon what I can neither see nor foresee. I came because I was called, and will go the moment that I perceive what may render my departure proper. My attachment has neither the blindness of the beginning, nor the microscopic accuracy of the close to such liaisons; but 'time and the hour' must decide upon what I do. I can as yet say nothing, because I hardly know any thing beyond what I have told you.

"I wrote to you last post for my moveables, as there is no getting a lodging with a chair or table here ready; and as I have already some things of the sort at Bologna which I had last summer there for my daughter, I have directed them to be moved; and wish the like to be done with those of Venice, that I may at least get out of the 'Albergo Imperiale,' which *is imperial* in all true sense of the epithet. Buffini may be paid for his poison. I forgot to thank you and Mrs. Hoppner for a whole treasure of toys for Allegra before our departure; it was very kind, and we are very grateful.

"Your account of the weeding of the Governor's party is very entertaining. If you do not understand the consular exceptions, I do; and it is right that a man of honour, and a woman of probity, should find it so, particularly in a place where there are not 'ten righteous.' As to nobility — in England none are strictly noble but peers, not even peers' sons, though titled by courtesy; nor knights of the garter, unless of the peerage, so that Castlereagh himself would hardly pass through a foreign herald's ordeal till the death of his father.

"The snow is a foot deep here. There is a theatre, and opera, — the Barber of Seville. Balls begin on Monday next. Pay the porter for never looking after the gate, and ship my chattels, and let me know, or let Castelli let me know, how my lawsuits go on — but fee him only in proportion to his success. Perhaps we may meet in the spring yet, if you are for England. I see Hobhouse has got into a scrape, which does not please me; he should not have gone so deep among

those men without calculating the consequences. I used to think myself the most imprudent of all among my friends and acquaintances, but almost begin to doubt it.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 354. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, January 31. 1820.

"You would hardly have been troubled with the removal of my furniture, but there is none to be had nearer than Bologna, and I have been fain to have that of the rooms which I fitted up for my daughter there in the summer removed here. The expense will be at least as great of the land carriage, so that you see it was necessity, and not choice. Here they get every thing from Bologna, except some lighter articles from Forli or Faenza.

"If Scott is returned, pray remember me to him, and plead laziness the whole and sole cause of my not replying: — dreadful is the exertion of letter-writing. The Carnival here is less boisterous, but we have balls and a theatre. I carried Bankes to both, and he carried away, I believe, a much more favourable impression of the society here than of that of Venice, — recollect that I speak of the *native* society only.

"I am drilling very hard to learn how to double a shawl, and should succeed to admiration if I did not always double it the wrong side out; and then I sometimes confuse and bring away two, so as to put all the Serventi out, besides keeping their *Servite* in the cold till every body can get back their property. But it is a dreadfully moral place, for you must not look at anybody's wife except your neighbour's, — if you go to the next door but one, you are scolded, and presumed to be perfidious. And then a relazione or an amicizia seems to be a regular affair of from five to fifteen years, at which period, if there occur a widowhood, it finishes by a sposalizio; and in the mean time it has so many rules of its own, that it is not much better. A man actually becomes a piece of female property, — they won't let their Serventi marry until there is a vacancy for themselves. I know two instances of this in one family here.

"To-night there was a ——[1] Lottery after the opera; it is an odd ceremony. Bankes and I took tickets of it, and buffooned together very merrily. He is gone to Firenze. Mrs. J * * should have sent you my postscript; there was no occasion to have bored you in person. I never interfere in anybody's squabbles, — she may scratch your face herself.

"The weather here has been dreadful — snow several feet — a *fiume* broke down a bridge, and flooded heaven knows how many *campi;* then rain came — and it is still thawing — so that my saddle-horses have a sinecure till the roads become more practicable. Why did Lega give away the goat? a blockhead — I must have him again.

"Will you pay Missiaglia and the Buffo Buffini of the Gran Bretagna? I heard from Moore, who is at Paris; I had previously written to him in London, but he has not yet got my letter, apparently.

"Believe me, &c."

LETTER 355. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, February 7. 1820.

"I have had no letter from you these two months; but since I came here in December, 1819, I sent you a letter for Moore, who is God knows *where* — in Paris or London, I presume. I have copied and cut the third canto of Don Juan *into two*, because it was too long; and I tell you this beforehand, because in case of any reckoning between you and me, these two are only to go for *one*, as this was the original form, and, in fact, the two together are not longer than one of the first: so remember that I have not made this division to *double* upon *you;* but merely to suppress some tediousness in the aspect of the thing. I should have served you a pretty trick if I had sent you, for example, cantos of 50 stanzas each.

"I am translating the first canto of Pulci's Morgante Maggiore, and have half done it; but these last days of the Carnival confuse and interrupt every thing.

"I have not yet sent off the cantos, and have some doubt whether they ought to be published, for they have not the spirit of the first. The outcry has not frightened but it has *hurt* me, and I have not written *con amore* this time. It is very decent, however, and as dull as 'the last new comedy.'

I think my translations of Pulci will make you stare. It must be put by the original, stanza for stanza, and verse for verse; and you will see what was permitted in a Catholic country and a bigoted age to a churchman, on the score of religion: — and so tell those buffoons who accuse me of attacking the Liturgy.

"I write in the greatest haste, it being the hour of the Corso, and I must go and buffoon with the rest. My daughter Allegra is just gone with the Countess G. in Count G.'s

[1] The word here, being under the seal, is illegible.

coach and six to join the cavalcade, and I must follow with all the rest of the Ravenna world. Our old Cardinal is dead, and the new one not appointed yet; but the masquing goes on the same, the vice-legate being a good governor. We have had hideous frost and snow, but all is mild again.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 356. TO MR. BANKES.

"Ravenna, February 19. 1820.

"I have room for you in the house here, as I had in Venice, if you think fit to make use of it; but do not expect to find the same gorgeous suite of tapestried halls. Neither dangers nor tropical heats have ever prevented your penetrating wherever you had a mind to it, and why should the snow now? — Italian snow — fie on it! — so pray come. Tita's heart yearns for you, and mayhap for your silver broadpieces; and your playfellow, the monkey, is alone and inconsolable.

"I forget whether you admire or tolerate red hair, so that I rather dread showing you all that I have about me and around me in this city. Come, nevertheless, — you can pay Dante a morning visit, and I will undertake that Theodore and Honoria will be most happy to see you in the forest hard by. We Goths, also, of Ravenna, hope you will not despise our arch-Goth, Theodoric. I must leave it to these worthies to entertain you all the fore part of the day, seeing that I have none at all myself — the lark that rouses me from my slumbers being an afternoon bird. But, then, all your evenings, and as much as you can give me of your nights, will be mine. Ay! and you will find me eating flesh, too, like yourself or any other cannibal, except it be upon Fridays. Then, there are more cantos (and be d—d to them) of what the courteous reader, Mr. Saunders, calls Grub Street in my drawer, which I have a little scheme to commit to your charge for England; only I must first cut up (or cut down) two aforesaid cantos into three, because I am grown base and mercenary, and it is an ill precedent to let my Mecænas, Murray, get too much for his money. I am busy, also, with Pulci — translating — servilely translating, stanza for stanza, and line for line, two octaves every night, — the same allowance as at Venice.

"Would you call at your banker's at Bologna, and ask him for some letters lying there for me, and burn them? — or I will — so do not burn them, but bring them, — and believe me ever and very affectionately yours,

"BYRON.

"P. S. — I have a particular wish to hear from yourself something about Cyprus, so pray recollect all that you can. — Good night."

LETTER 357. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, February 21. 1820.

"The bulldogs will be very agreeable. I have only those of this country, who, though good, have not the tenacity of tooth and stoicism in endurance of my canine fellow-citizens: then pray send them by the readiest conveyance — perhaps best by sea. Mr. Kinnaird will disburse for them, and deduct from the amount on your application or that of Captain Tyler.

"I see the good old King[1] is gone to his place. One can't help being sorry, though blindness, and age, and insanity, are supposed to be drawbacks on human felicity; but I am not at all sure that the latter, at least, might not render him happier than any of his subjects.

"I have no thoughts of coming to the coronation, though I should like to see it, and though I have a right to be a puppet in it; but my division with Lady Byron, which has drawn an equinoctial line between me and mine in all other things, will operate in this also to prevent my being in the same procession.

"By Saturday's post I sent you four packets, containing Cantos third and fourth. Recollect that these two cantos reckon only as *one* with you and me, being, in fact, the third canto cut into two, because I found it too long. Remember this, and don't imagine that there could be any other motive. The whole is about 225 stanzas, more or less, and a lyric of 96 lines, so that they are no longer than the first *single* cantos: but the truth is, that I made the first too long, and should have cut those down also had I thought better. Instead of saying in future for so many cantos, say so many stanzas or pages; it was Jacob Tonson's way[2], and certainly the best; it prevents mistakes. I might have sent you a dozen cantos of 40 stanzas each, — those of 'The Minstrel' (Beattie's) are no longer, — and ruined you at once, if you don't suffer as it is. But

[1] [George the Third; who died January 29. 1820.]

[2] [When Dryden engaged himself in the composition of those imitations of Boccaccio and Chaucer which have been since called the "Fables," he entered into an agreement with Tonson to furnish ten thousand lines for two hundred and fifty guineas; and, to make up the full number, he gave the bookseller the Epistle to his Cousin, and his Alexander's Feast.]

recollect that you are not *pinned down* to any thing you say in a letter, and that, calculating even these two cantos as *one* only (which they were and are to be reckoned), you are not bound by your offer. Act as may seem fair to all parties.

"I have finished my translation of the first canto of 'The Morgante Maggiore' of Pulci, which I will transcribe and send. It is the parent, not only of Whistlecraft, but of all jocose Italian poetry.[1] You must print it side by side with the original Italian, because I wish the reader to judge of the fidelity: it is stanza for stanza, and often line for line, if not word for word.

"You ask me for a volume of manners, &c. on Italy. Perhaps I am in the case to know more of them than most Englishmen, because I have lived among the natives, and in parts of the country where Englishmen, never resided before (I speak of Romagna and this place particularly); but there are many reasons why I do not choose to treat in print on such a subject. I have lived in their houses and in the heart of their families, sometimes merely as 'amico di casa,' and sometimes as 'amico di cuore' of the Dama, and in neither case do I feel myself authorised in making a book of them. Their moral is not your moral; their life is not your life; you would not understand it; it is not English, nor French, nor German, which you would all understand. The conventual education, the cavalier servitude, the habits of thought and living are so entirely different, and the difference becomes so much more striking the more you live intimately with them, that I know not how to make you comprehend a people who are at once temperate and profligate, serious in their characters and buffoons in their amusements, capable of impressions and passions, which are at once *sudden* and *durable* (what you find in no other nation), and who actually have no society (what we would call so), as you may see by their comedies; they have no real comedy, not even in Goldoni, and that is because they have no society to draw it from.

"Their conversazioni are not society at all. They go to the theatre to talk, and into company to hold their tongues. The *women* sit in a circle, and the men gather into groups, or they play at dreary faro, or 'lotto reale,' for small sums. Their academie are concerts like our own, with better music and more form. Their best things are the carnival balls and masquerades, when every body runs mad for six weeks. After their dinners and suppers they make extempore verses and buffoon one another; but it is in a humour which you would not enter into, ye of the north.

"In their houses it is better. I should know something of the matter, having had a pretty general experience among their women, from the fisherman's wife up to the Nobil Dama, whom I serve. Their system has its rules, and its fitnesses, and its decorums, so as to be reduced to a kind of discipline or game at hearts, which admits few deviations, unless you wish to lose it. They are extremely tenacious, and jealous as furies, not permitting their lovers even to marry if they can help it, and keeping them always close to them in public as in private, whenever they can. In short, they transfer marriage to adultery, and strike the *not* out of that commandment. The reason is, that they marry for their parents, and love for themselves. They exact fidelity from a lover as a debt of honour, while they pay the husband as a tradesman, that is, not at all. You hear a person's character, male or female, canvassed not as depending on their conduct to their husbands or wives, but to their mistress or lover. If I wrote a quarto, I don't know that I could do more than amplify what I have here noted. It is to be observed that while they do all this, the greatest outward respect is to be paid to the husbands, not only by the ladies, but by their Serventi — particularly if the husband serves no one himself (which is not often the case, however): so that you would often suppose them relations — the Servente making the figure of one adopted into the family. Sometimes the ladies run a little restive and elope, or divide, or make a scene: but this is at starting, generally, when they know no better, or when they fall in love with a foreigner, or some such anomaly, — and is always reckoned unnecessary and extravagant.

"You enquire after Dante's Prophecy: I have not done more than six hundred lines, but will vaticinate at leisure.

"Of the bust I know nothing. No cameos or seals are to be cut here or elsewhere that I know of, in any good style. Hobhouse should write himself to Thorwaldsen: the bust was made and paid for three years ago.

[1] ["To the kind reader of our sober clime
This way of writing will appear exotic;
Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,
Who sang when chivalry was more Quixotic,
And revelled in the fancies of the time,
True knights, chaste dames, huge giants, kings despotic."

Don Juan, c. iv. st. 6.]

"Pray tell Mrs. Leigh to request Lady Byron to urge forward the transfer from the funds. I wrote to Lady Byron on business this post, addressed to the care of Mr. D. Kinnaird."

LETTER 358. TO MR. BANKES.

"Ravenna, February 26. 1820.

"Pulci and I are waiting for you with impatience; but I suppose we must give way to the attraction of the Bolognese galleries for a time. I know nothing of pictures myself, and care almost as little: but to me there are none like the Venetian — above all, Giorgione. I remember well his Judgment of Solomon in the Mariscalchi in Bologna. The real mother is beautiful, exquisitely beautiful. Buy her, by all means, if you can, and take her home with you: put her in safety: for be assured there are troublous times brewing for Italy; and as I never could keep out of a row in my life, it will be my fate, I dare say, to be over head and ears in it; but no matter, these are the stronger reasons for coming to see me soon.

"I have more of Scott's novels (for surely they are Scott's) since we met, and am more and more delighted. I think that I even prefer them to his poetry, which (by the way) I redde for the first time in my life in your rooms in Trinity College.

"There are some curious commentaries on Dante preserved here, which you should see. Believe me ever, faithfully and most affectionately, yours, &c."

LETTER 359. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, March 1. 1820.

"I sent you by last post the translation of the first canto of the Morgante Maggiore, and wish you to ask Rose about the words 'sbergo' and 'usbergo,' which I have translated *cuirass*. I suspect that it means *helmet* also. Now, if so, which of the senses is best accordant with the text? I have adopted cuirass, but will be amenable to reasons. Of the natives, some say one, and some t'other: but they are no great Tuscans in Romagna. However, I will ask Sgricci (the famous improvisatore) to-morrow, who is a native of Arezzo.[1] The Countess Guiccioli, who is reckoned a very cultivated young lady, and the dictionary, say *cuirass*. I have written cuirass, but *helmet* runs in my head nevertheless — and will run in verse very well, whilk is the principal point. I will ask the Sposa Spina Spinelli, too, the Florentine bride of Count Gabriel Rusponi, just imported from Florence, and get the sense out of somebody.

"I have just been visiting the new Cardinal, who arrived the day before yesterday in his legation. He seems a good old gentleman, pious and simple, and not quite like his predecessor, who was a bon-vivant, in the worldly sense of the words.

"Enclosed is a letter which I received some time ago from Dallas.[2] It will explain itself. I have not answered it. This comes of doing people good. At one time or another (including copyrights) this person has had about fourteen hundred pounds of my money, and he writes what he calls a posthumous work about me, and a scrubby letter accusing me of treating him ill, when I never did any such thing. It is true that I left off letter-writing, as I have done with almost every body else; but I can't see how that was misusing him.

"I look upon his epistle as the consequence of my not sending him another hundred pounds, which he wrote to me for about two years ago, and which I thought proper to withhold, he having had his share, methought, of what I could dispone upon others.

"In your last you ask me after my articles of domestic wants. I believe they are as usual: the bulldogs, magnesia, soda-powders, tooth-powders, brushes, and every thing of the kind which are here unattainable. You still ask me to return to England: alas! to what purpose? You do not know what you are requiring. Return I must, probably, some day or other (if I live), sooner or later; but it will not be for pleasure, nor can it end in good. You enquire after my health and SPIRITS in large letters: my health can't be very bad, for I cured myself of a sharp tertian ague, in three weeks, with cold water, which had held my stoutest gondolier for months, notwithstanding all the bark of the apothecary, — a circumstance which surprised Dr. Aglietti, who said it was a proof of great stamina, particularly in so epidemic a season. I did it out of dislike to the taste of bark (which I can't bear), and succeeded, contrary to the prophecies of every body, by simply taking nothing at all. As to *spirits*, they are unequal, now high, now low, like other people's I suppose, and depending upon circumstances.

"Pray send me W. Scott's new novels. What are their names and characters? I read some of his former ones, at least once a day, for an hour or so. The last are too

[1] [Sgricci died at Florence in July 1836.]

[2] [See BYRONIANA.]

hurried: he forgets Ravenswood's name, and calls him *Edgar* and then *Norman;* and Girder, the cooper, is styled now *Gilbert*, and now *John;* and he don't make enough of Montrose; but Dalgetty is excellent, and so is Lucy Ashton, and the b—h her mother. What is *Ivanhoe?* and what do you call his other? are there *two?* Pray make him write at least two a year: I like no reading so well.

Don't forget to answer forthwith, for I wish to hear of the arrival of the packets; viz. the two cantos of Donny Johnny, and the translation of Morgante Maggiore, or Major Morgan.

"The editor of the Bologna Telegraph has sent me a paper with extracts from Mr. Mulock's[1] (his name always reminds me of Muley Moloch of Morocco) 'Atheism answered,' in which there is a long eulogium of my poesy, and a great 'compatimento' for my misery. I never could understand what they mean by accusing me of irreligion. However, they may have it their own way. This gentleman seems to be my great admirer; so I take what he says in good part, as he evidently intends kindness, to which I can't accuse myself of being invincible.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 360. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, March 5. 1820.

"In case, in your country, you should not readily lay hands on the Morgante Maggiore, I send you the original text of the first canto, to correspond with the translation which I sent you a few days ago. It is from the Naples edition in quarto of 1732, — *dated Florence*, however, by a trick of *the trade*, which you, as one of the allied sovereigns of the profession, will perfectly understand without any further spiegazione.

"It is strange that here nobody understands the real precise meaning of 'sbergo,' or 'usbergo[2],' an old Tuscan word, which I have rendered *cuirass* (but am not sure it is not *helmet*). I have asked at least twenty people, learned and ignorant, male and female, including poets, and officers civil and military. The dictionary says *cuirass*, but gives no authority; and a female friend of mine says *positively cuirass*, which makes me doubt the fact still more than before. Ginguené says 'bonnet de fer,' with the usual superficial decision of a Frenchman, so that I can't believe him: and what between the dictionary, the Italian woman, and the Frenchman, there is no trusting to a word they say. The context, too, which should decide, admits equally of either meaning, as you will perceive. Ask Rose, Hobhouse, Merivale, and Foscolo, and vote with the majority. Is Frere a good Tuscan? if he be, bother him too. I have tried, you see, to be as accurate as I well could. This is my third or fourth letter, or packet, within the last twenty days."

LETTER 361. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, March 14. 1820.

"Enclosed is Dante's Prophecy — Vision —or what not.[3] Where I have left more than one reading (which I have done often), you may adopt that which Gifford, Frere, Rose, and Hobhouse, and others of your Utican Senate think the best or least bad. The preface will explain all that is explicable. These are but the four first cantos: if approved, I will go on.

"Pray mind in printing; and let some good Italian scholar correct the Italian quotations.

"Four days ago I was overturned in an open carriage between the river and a steep bank: — wheels dashed to pieces, slight bruises, narrow escape, and all that; but no harm done, though coachman, footman, horses, and vehicle, were all mixed together like macaroni. It was owing to bad driving, as I say; but the coachman swears to a start on the part of the horses. We went against a post on the verge of a steep bank, and capsized. I usually go out of the town in a carriage, and meet the saddle horses at the bridge; it was in going there that we boggled; but I got my ride, as usual, after the accident. They say here it was all owing to St. Antonio, of Padua, (serious, I assure you,) — who does thirteen miracles a day, — that worse did not come of it. I have no objection to this being his fourteenth in the four-and-twenty hours. He presides over overturns and all escapes therefrom, it seems: and they dedicate pictures, &c. to him, as the sailors once did to Neptune, after 'the high Roman fashion.'

"Yours, in haste."

[1] [Thomas Mulock, Esq., of Magdalen Hall, author of several theological and political tracts. He was, at this time, residing at Geneva, and delivering a course of Lectures on English Literature.]

[2] It has been suggested to me that usbergo is obviously the same as hauberk, habergeon, &c., all from the German *halsberg*, or covering of the neck.

[3] There were in this Poem, originally, three lines of remarkable strength and severity, which, as the Italian poet against whom they were directed was then living, were omitted in the publication. I shall here give them from memory.

"The prostitution of his Muse and wife,
Both beautiful, and both by him debased,
Shall salt his bread and give him means of life."

LETTER 362. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, March 20. 1820.

"Last post I sent you 'The Vision of Dante,'—four first cantos. Enclosed you will find, *line for line*, in *third rhyme* (*terza rima*,) of which your British blackguard reader as yet understands nothing, Fanny of Rimini. You know that she was born here, and married, and slain, from Cary, Boyd, and such people. I have done it into *cramp* English, line for line, and rhyme for rhyme, to try the possibility. You had best append it to the poems already sent by last three posts. I shall not allow you to play the tricks you did last year, with the prose you *post*-scribed to Mazeppa, which I sent to you *not* to be published, if not in a periodical paper,—and there you tacked it, without a word of explanation. If this is published, publish it *with the original*, and *together* with the *Pulci* translation, *or* the *Dante imitation*. I suppose you have both by now, and the *Juan* long before.[1]

LETTER 363. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, March 23. 1820.

"I have received your letter of the 7th. Besides the four packets you have already received, I have sent the Pulci a few days after, and since (a few days ago) the four first cantos of Dante's Prophecy, (the best thing I ever wrote, if it be not *unintelligible*,) and by last post a literal translation, word for word (versed like the original), of the episode of Francesca of Rimini. I want to hear what you think of the new Juans, and the translations, and the Vision. They are all things that are, or ought to be, very different from one another.

"If you choose to make a print from the Venetian, you may; but she don't correspond at all to the character you mean her to represent. On the contrary, the Contessa G. does (except that she is remarkably fair), and is much prettier than the Fornarina; but I have no picture of her except a miniature, which is very ill done; and, besides, it would not be proper, on any account whatever, to make such a use of it, even if you had a copy.

"Recollect that the *two* new cantos only count with us for *one*. You may put the Pulci and Dante together: perhaps that were best. So you have put *your* name to Juan, after all your panic, and the row: you are a rare fellow. I must now put myself in a passion to continue my prose.

"Yours, &c.

"BYRON."

"I have caused write to Thorwaldsen. Pray be careful in sending my daughter's picture—I mean, that it be not hurt in the carriage, for it is a journey rather long and jolting."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1820.

RAVENNA.—POPE CONTROVERSY.—PULCI.—CONGREVE.—SHERIDAN.—MRS. CENTLIVRE.—COMMENCEMENT OF MARINO FALIERO.—SIR WALTER SCOTT.—GOLDSMITH.—THE CARBONARI.—REPLY TO BLACKWOOD.—ITALIAN TRANSLATION OF CHILDE HAROLD.—SIR HUMPHRY DAVY AT RAVENNA.—ANECDOTES.—CAMPBELL'S POETS.—VOLTAIRE.—GOETHE ON MANFRED.—PAPAL DECREE.—GUICCIOLI SEPARATION.

LETTER 364. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, March 28. 1820.

"ENCLOSED is a 'Screed of Doctrine' for you, of which I will trouble you to acknowledge the receipt by next post. Mr. Hobhouse must have the correction of it for the press. You may show it first to whom you please.

"I wish to know what became of my two Epistles from St. Paul (translated from the Armenian three years ago and more), and of the letter to Roberts of last autumn, which you never have attended to? There are two packets with this.

"P. S.—I have some thoughts of publishing the 'Hints from Horace,' written ten years ago[2],—if Hobhouse can rummage them out of my papers left at his father's,—with some omissions and alterations previously to be made when I see the proofs."

[1] For this translation of the exquisitely pathetic episode of Francesca of Rimini, see Works, p. 505.

[2] When making the observations which occur in the early part of this work, on the singular preference given by the noble author to the "Hints from Horace," I was not aware of the revival of this strange predilection, which (as it appears from the above letter, and, still more strongly, from some that follow) took place so many years after, in the full maturity of his powers and taste. Such a delusion is hardly conceivable, and can only, perhaps, be accounted for by that tenaciousness of early opinions and impressions by which his mind, in other respects so versatile, was characterised.

LETTER 365. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, March 29. 1820.

"Herewith you will receive a note (enclosed) on Pope, which you will find tally with a part of the text of last post. I have at last lost all patience with the atrocious cant and nonsense about Pope, with which our present blackguards are overflowing, and am determined to make such head against it as an individual can, by prose or verse; and I will at least do it with good will. There is no bearing it any longer; and if it goes on, it will destroy what little good writing or taste remains amongst us. I hope there are still a few men of taste to second me; but if not, I'll battle it alone, convinced that it is in the best cause of English literature.

"I have sent you so many packets, verse and prose, lately, that you will be tired of the postage, if not of the perusal. I want to answer some parts of your last letter, but I have not time, for I must 'boot and saddle,' as my Captain Craigengelt (an officer of the old Napoleon Italian army) is in waiting, and my groom and cattle to boot.

"You have given me a screed of metaphor and what not about *Pulci*, and manners, and 'going without clothes, like our Saxon ancestors.' Now, the *Saxons did not go without clothes;* and, in the next place, they are not my ancestors, nor yours either; for mine were Norman, and yours, I take it by your name, were *Gael.* And, in the next, I differ from you about the 'refinement' which has banished the comedies of Congreve. Are not the comedies of *Sheridan* acted to the thinnest houses? I *know* (as *ex-committed*) that 'The School for Scandal' was the *worst stock piece* upon record. I also know that Congreve gave up writing because Mrs. Centlivre's balderdash drove his comedies off. So it is not decency, but stupidity, that does all this; for Sheridan is as *decent* a writer as need be, and Congreve no worse than Mrs. Centlivre, of whom Wilks (the actor) said, 'not only her play would be damned, but she too.' He alluded to 'A Bold Stroke for a Wife.' But last, and most to the purpose, Pulci is *not* an *indecent* writer — at least in his first canto, as you will have perceived by this time.

"You talk of *refinement:* — are you all *more* moral? are you *so* moral? No such thing. *I* know what the world is in England, by my own proper experience of the best of it — at least of the loftiest; and I have described it every where as it is to be found in all places.

"But to return. I should like to see the *proofs* of mine answer, because there will be something to omit or to alter. But pray let it be carefully printed. When convenient let me have an answer.

LETTER 366. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, March 31. 1820.

"Ravenna continues much the same as I described it. Conversazioni all Lent, and much better ones than any at Venice. There are small games at hazard, that is, faro, where nobody can point more than a shilling or two; — other card-tables, and as much talk and coffee as you please. Every body does and says what they please; and I do not recollect any disagreeable events, except being three times falsely accused of flirtation, and once being robbed of six sixpences by a nobleman of the city, a Count * * *. I did not suspect the illustrious delinquent; but the Countess V * * * and the Marquis L * * * told me of it directly, and also that it was a way he had, of filching money when he saw it before him; but I did not *ax* him for the cash, but contented myself with telling him that if he did it again, I should anticipate the law.

"There is to be a theatre in April, and a fair, and an opera, and another opera in June, besides the fine weather of nature's giving, and the rides in the Forest of Pine. With my best respects to Mrs. Hoppner, believe me ever, &c.

"BYRON.

"P. S. — Could you give me an item of what books remain at Venice? I *don't* want them, but want to know whether the few that are not here are there, and were not lost by the way. I hope and trust you have got all your wine safe, and that it is drinkable. Allegra is prettier, I think, but as obstinate as a mule, and as ravenous as a vulture: health good, to judge of the complexion — temper tolerable, but for vanity and pertinacity. She thinks herself handsome, and will do as she pleases.

LETTER 367. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, April 9. 1820.

"In the name of all the devils in the printing-office, why don't you write to acknowledge the receipt of the second, third, and fourth packets, viz. the Pulci — translation and original, the *Danticles*, the Observations on, &c.? You forget that you keep me in hot water till I know whether they are arrived, or if I must have the bore of re-copying.

"Have you gotten the cream of translations, Francesca of Rimini, from the Inferno? Why, I have sent you a warehouse of trash within the last month, and you have no sort of feeling about you: a pastry-cook would have had twice the gratitude, and thanked me at least for the quantity.

"To make the letter heavier, I enclose you the Cardinal Legate's (our Campeius) circular for his conversazione this evening. It is the anniversary of the Pope's *tiara*-tion, and all polite Christians, even of the Lutheran creed, must go and be civil. And there will be a circle, and a faro-table, (for shillings, that is, they don't allow high play,) and all the beauty, nobility, and sanctity of Ravenna present. The Cardinal himself is a very good-natured little fellow, bishop of Muda, and legate here, — a decent believer in all the doctrines of the church. He has kept his housekeeper these forty years * * *; but is reckoned a pious man, and a moral liver.

"I am not quite sure that I won't be among you this autumn, for I find that business don't go on — what with trustees and lawyers — as it should do, 'with all deliberate speed.' They differ about investments in Ireland.

"Between the devil and deep sea,
Between the lawyer and trustee,

I am puzzled; and so much time is lost by my not being upon the spot, what with answers, demurs, rejoinders, that it may be I must come and look to it; for one says do, and t'other don't, so that I know not which way to turn: but perhaps they can manage without me.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — I have begun a tragedy on the subject of Marino Faliero, the Doge of Venice; but you sha'n't see it these six years, if you don't acknowledge my packets with more quickness and precision. *Always write, if but a line*, by return of post, when any thing arrives, which is not a mere letter.

"Address direct to Ravenna; it saves a week's time, and much postage."

LETTER 368. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, April 16. 1820.

"Post after post arrives without bringing any acknowledgment from you of the different packets (excepting the first) which I have sent within the last two months, all of which ought to be arrived long ere now; and as they were announced in other letters, you ought at least to say whether they are come or not. You are not expected to write frequent, or long letters, as your time is much occupied; but when parcels that have cost some pains in the composition, and great trouble in the copying, are sent to you, I should at least be put out of suspense, by the immediate acknowledgment, per return of post, addressed *directly* to *Ravenna*. I am naturally — knowing what continental posts are — anxious to hear that they are arrived; especially as I loathe the task of copying so much, that if there was a human being that could copy my blotted MSS. he should have all they can ever bring for his trouble. All I desire is two lines, to say, such a day I received such a packet. There are at least six unacknowledged. This is neither kind nor courteous.

"I have, besides, another reason for desiring you to be speedy, which is, that there is THAT brewing in Italy which will speedily cut off all security of communication, and set all your Anglo-travellers flying in every direction, with their usual fortitude in foreign tumults. The Spanish and French affairs have set the Italians in a ferment; and no wonder: they have been too long trampled on. This will make a sad scene for your exquisite traveller, but not for the resident, who naturally wishes a people to redress itself. I shall, if permitted by the natives, remain to see what will come of it, and perhaps to take a turn with them, like Dugald Dalgetty and his horse, in case of business; for I shall think it by far the most interesting spectacle and moment in existence, to see the Italians send the barbarians of all nations back to their own dens. I have lived long enough among them to feel more for them as a nation than for any other people in existence. But they want union, and they want principle; and I doubt their success. However, they will try, probably; and if they do, it will be a good cause. No Italian can hate an Austrian more than I do: unless it be the English, the Austrians seem to me the most obnoxious race under the sky.

"But I doubt, if any thing be done, it won't be so quietly as in Spain. To be sure, revolutions are not to be made with rose-water, where there are foreigners as masters.

"Write while you can; for it is but the toss up of a paul that there will not be a row that will somewhat retard the mail by and by.

"Yours, &c.

"BYRON."

LETTER 369. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, April 18. 1820.

"I have caused write to Siri and Willhalm to send with Vincenza, in a boat, the camp-beds and swords left in their care when I quitted Venice. There are also several pounds of *Manton's best powder* in a Japan case; *but unless* I felt sure of getting it away from V. without seizure, I won't have it ventured. I *can get* it *in* here, by means of an acquaintance in the customs, who has offered to get it ashore for me; but should like to be certiorated of its safety in leaving Venice. I would not lose it for its weight in gold — there is none such in Italy, as I take it to be.

"I wrote to you a week or so ago, and hope you are in good plight and spirits. Sir Humphry Davy[1] is here, and was last night at the Cardinal's. As I had been there last Sunday, and yesterday was warm, I did not go, which I should have done, if I had thought of meeting the man of chemistry. He called this morning, and I shall go in search of him at Corso time. I believe to-day, being Monday, there is no great conversazione, and only the family one at the Marchese Cavalli's, where I go as a *relation* sometimes; so that, unless he stays a day or two, we should hardly meet in public.

"The theatre is to open in May for the fair, if there is not a row in all Italy by that time, — the Spanish business has set them all a constitutioning, and what will be the end, no one knows — it is also necessary thereunto to have a beginning.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — My benediction to Mrs. Hoppner. How is your little boy? Allegra is growing, and has increased in good looks and obstinacy."

LETTER 370. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, April 23. 1820.

"The proofs don't contain the *last* stanzas of Canto second, but end abruptly with the 105th stanza.

"I told you long ago that the new Cantos[2] were *not* good, and I also *told you a reason.* Recollect, I do not oblige you to publish them; you may suppress them, if you like, but I can alter nothing. I have erased the six stanzas about those two impostors, Southey and Wordsworth (which I suppose will give you great pleasure), but I can do no more. I can neither recast, nor replace; but I give you leave to put it all into the fire, if you like, or *not* to publish, and I think that's sufficient.

"I told you that I wrote on with no good will — that I had been, *not* frightened, but *hurt* by the outcry, and, besides, that when I wrote last November, I was ill in body, and in very great distress of mind about some private things of my own; but *you would* have it: so I sent it to you, and to make it lighter, *cut* it in two — but I can't piece it together again. I can't cobble: I must 'either make a spoon or spoil a horn,' — and there's an end; for there's no remeid: but I leave you free will to suppress the whole, if you like it.

"About the *Morgante Maggiore, I won't have a line omitted.* It may circulate, or it may not; but all the criticism on earth shan't touch a line, unless it be because it is *badly* translated. Now you say, and I say, and others say, that the translation is a good one; and so it shall go to press as it is. Pulci must answer for his own irreligion: I answer for the translation only.

"Pray let Mr. Hobhouse look to the *Italian* next time in the *proofs:* this time, while I am scribbling to you, they are corrected by one who passes for the prettiest woman in Romagna, and even the marches, as far as Ancona, be the other who she may.

"I am glad you like my answer to your enquiries about Italian society. It is fit you should like *something*, and be d—d to you.

"My love to Scott. I shall think higher of knighthood ever after for his being dubbed. By the way, he is the first poet titled for his talent in Britain: it has happened abroad before now; but on the Continent titles are universal and worthless. Why don't you send me Ivanhoe and the Monastery? I have never written to Sir Walter, for I know he has a thousand things, and I a thousand nothings, to do; but I hope to see him at Abbotsford before very long, and I will sweat his claret for him, though Italian abstemiousness has made my brain but a shilpit concern for a Scotch sitting 'inter pocula.' I love Scott and Moore, and all the better brethren; but I hate and abhor that puddle of water-worms whom you have taken into your troop.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — You say that *one half* is very good: you are *wrong;* for, if it were, it would be the finest poem in existence. *Where* is the poetry of which *one half* is good? is it the *Æneid?* is it *Milton*'s? is it *Dryden*'s? is it

[1] [See BYRONIANA.]

[2] Of Don Juan.

any one's except *Pope*'s and Goldsmith's, of which *all* is good? and yet these two last are the poets your pond poets would explode. But if *one half* of the two new Cantos be good in your opinion, what the devil would you have more? No — no; no poetry is *generally* good — only by fits and starts — and you are lucky to get a sparkle here and there. You might as well want a midnight *all stars* as rhyme all perfect.

"We are on the verge of a *row* here. Last night they have overwritten all the city walls with 'Up with the republic!' and 'Death to the Pope!' &c. &c. This would be nothing in London, where the walls are privileged. But here it is a different thing: they are not used to such fierce political inscriptions, and the police is all on the alert, and the Cardinal glares pale through all his purple.

"April 24. 1820. 8 o'clock, P.M.

"The police have been, all noon and after, searching for the inscribers, but have caught none as yet. They must have been all night about it, for the 'Live Republics — Death to Popes and Priests,' are innumerable, and plastered over all the palaces: ours has plenty. There is 'Down with the Nobility,' too; they are down enough already, for that matter. A very heavy rain and wind having come on, I did not get on horseback to go out and 'skirr the country;' but I shall mount to-morrow, and take a canter among the peasantry, who are a savage, resolute race, always riding with guns in their hands. I wonder they don't suspect the serenaders, for they play on the guitar here all night, as in Spain, to their mistresses.

"Talking of politics, as Caleb Quotem says, pray look at the *conclusion* of my Ode on *Waterloo*[1], written in the year 1815, and, comparing it with the Duke de Berri's catastrophe in 1820, tell me if I have not as good a right to the character of '*Vates*,' in both senses of the word, as Fitzgerald and Coleridge?

"'Crimson tears will follow yet —'

and have not they?

"I can't pretend to foresee what will happen among you Englishers at this distance, but I vaticinate a row in Italy; in whilk case, I don't know that I won't have a finger in it. I dislike the Austrians, and think the Italians infamously oppressed; and if they begin, why, I will recommend 'the erection of a sconce upon Drumsnab,' like Dugald Dalgetty."

LETTER 371. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, May 8. 1820.

"From your not having written again, an intention which your letter of the 7th ultimo indicated, I have to presume that the 'Prophecy of Dante' has not been found more worthy than its predecessors in the eyes of your illustrious synod. In that case, you will be in some perplexity; to end which, I repeat to you, that you are not to consider yourself as bound or pledged to publish any thing because it is *mine*, but always to act according to your own views, or opinions, or those of your friends; and to be sure that you will in no degree offend me by 'declining the article,' to use a technical phrase. The *prose* observations on John Wilson's attack, I do not intend for publication at this time; and I send a copy of verses to Mr. Kinnaird (they were written last year on crossing the Po) which must *not* be published either. I mention this, because it is probable he may give you a copy. Pray recollect this, as they are mere verses of society, and written upon private feelings and passions. And, moreover, I can't consent to any mutilations or omissions of *Pulci*: the original has been ever free from such in Italy, the capital of Christianity, and the translation may be so in England; though you will think it strange that they should have allowed such *freedom* for so many centuries to the Morgante, while the other day they confiscated the whole translation of the fourth canto of Childe Harold, and have persecuted Leoni, the translator — so he writes me, and so I could have told him, had he consulted me before his publication. This shows how much more politics interest men in these parts than religion. Half a dozen invectives against tyranny confiscate Childe Harold in a month; and eight and twenty cantos of quizzing monks and knights, and church government, are let loose for centuries. I copy Leoni's account.

"'Non ignorerà forse che la mia versione del 4° Canto del Childe Harold fu confiscata in ogni parte: ed io stesso ho dovuto soffrir vessazioni altrettanto ridicole quanto illiberali, ad arte che alcuni versi fossero esclusi dalla censura. Ma siccome il divieto non fa d'ordinario che accrescere la curiosità così quel carme sull' Italia è ricercato più che

[1] ["Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
Millions breathe but to inherit
Her for ever bounding spirit —
When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble.
Smile they at this idle threat?
Crimson tears will follow yet."
Works, p. 562.]

mai, e penso di farlo ristampare in Inghilterra senza nulla escludere. Sciagurata condizione di questa mia patria! se patria si può chiamare una terra così avvilita dalla fortuna, dagli unomini, da se medesima.'

"Rose will translate this to you. Has he had his letter? I enclosed it to you months ago.

"This intended piece of publication I shall dissuade him from, or he may chance to see the inside of St. Angelo's. The last sentence of his letter is the common and pathetic sentiment of all his countrymen.[1]

"Sir Humphry Davy was here last fortnight, and I was in his company in the house of a very pretty Italian lady of rank, who, by way of displaying her learning in presence of the great chemist, then describing his fourteenth ascension to Mount Vesuvius, asked 'if there was not a similar volcano in *Ireland*?' My only notion of an Irish volcano consisted of the lake of Killarney, which I naturally conceived her to mean; but, on second thoughts, I divined that she alluded to *Ice*-land and to Hecla — and so it proved, though she sustained her volcanic topography for some time with all the amiable pertinacity of 'the feminie.' She soon after turned to me and asked me various questions about Sir Humphry's philosophy, and I explained as well as an oracle his skill in gases, safety lamps, and ungluing the Pompeian MSS. 'But what do you call him?' said she. 'A great chemist,' quoth I. 'What can he do?' repeated the lady, 'Almost any thing,' said I. 'Oh, then, mio caro, do pray beg him to give me something to dye my eyebrows black. I have tried a thousand things, and the colours all come off; and besides, they don't grow; can't he invent something to make them grow?' All this with the greatest earnestness; and what you will be surprised at, she is neither ignorant nor a fool, but really well educated and clever. But they speak like children, when first out of their convents; and, after all, this is better than an English blue-stocking.

"I did not tell Sir Humphry of this last piece of philosophy, not knowing how he might take it. Davy was much taken with Ravenna, and the PRIMITIVE *Italianism* of the people, who are unused to foreigners: but he only stayed a day.

"Send me Scott's novels and some news.

"P. S. — I have begun and advanced into the second act of a tragedy on the subject of the Doge's conspiracy (*i. e.* the story of Marino Faliero); but my present feeling is so little encouraging on such matters, that I begin to think I have mined my talent out, and proceed in no great phantasy of finding a new vein.

"P. S. — I sometimes think (if the Italians don't rise) of coming over to England in the autumn after the coronation, (at which I would not appear, on account of my family schism,) but as yet I can decide nothing. The place must be a great deal changed since I left it, now more than four years ago."

LETTER 372. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, May 20. 1820.

"Murray, my dear, make my respects to Thomas Campbell, and tell him from me, with faith and friendship, three things that he must right in his poets: Firstly, he says Anstey's Bath Guide characters are taken from Smollett. 'Tis impossible: — the Guide was published in 1766, and Humphrey Clinker in 1771 — *dunque*, 'tis Smollett who has taken from Anstey.[2] Secondly, he does not know to whom Cowper alludes, when he says that there was one who 'built a church to *God*, and then blasphemed his name:' it was 'Deo erexit *Voltaire*' to whom that maniacal Calvinist and coddled poet alludes.[3] Thirdly, he misquotes and spoils a passage from Shakspeare, 'to gild refined gold, to paint the lily,' &c.; for *lily* he puts *rose*, and bedevils in more words than one the whole quotation.[4]

[1] [In a letter of this same date Lord Byron says, "His countrymen execrate Castlereagh as the cause, by the conduct of the English at Genoa. Surely that man will not die in his bed! There is no spot of the earth where his name is not a hissing, and a curse. Imagine what must be the man's talent for odium, who has contrived to spread his infamy like a pestilence from Ireland to Italy, and to make his name an execration in all languages."]

[2] ["*Argal*, if there has been any borrowing, Anstey must be the creditor, and not the debtor." — See *Works*, p. 809.]

[3] ["Nor he who, for the bane of thousands born,
Built God a *church*, and laugh'd his Word to scorn." COWPER.
"The Calvinist meant Voltaire, and the church of Ferney, with its inscription, 'Deo erexit Voltaire.'" — *Ibid.*]

[4] ["In the Life of Burns, Mr. Campbell quotes Shakspeare thus: —

"'To gild refined gold, to paint *the rose*,
Or *add fresh* perfume *to* the violet.'

"This version by no means improves the original, which is as follows: —

"'To gild refined gold, to paint the *lily*,
To throw a perfume on the violet,' &c.

"A great poet quoting another should be correct: he should also be accurate when he accuses a Parnassian brother of that dangerous charge 'borrowing:' a poet

"Now, Tom is a fine fellow; but he should be correct; for the first is an *injustice* (to Anstey), the second an *ignorance*, and the third a *blunder*. Tell him all this, and let him take it in good part; for I might have rammed it into a review and rowed him — instead of which, I act like a Christian.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 373. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, May 20. 1820.

"First and foremost, you must forward my letter to *Moore* dated 2d *January*, which I said you might open, but desired you *to forward*. Now, you should really not forget these little things, because they do mischief among friends. You are an excellent man, a great man, and live among great men, but do pray recollect your absent friends and authors.

"In the first place, *your packets;* then a letter from Kinnaird, on the most urgent business; another from Moore, about a communication to Lady Byron of importance; a fourth from the mother of Allegra; and, fifthly, at Ravenna, the Countess G. is on the eve of being separated. But the Italian public are on her side, particularly the women, — and the men also, because they say that *he* had no business to take the business up now after a year of toleration. All her relations (who are numerous, high in rank, and powerful) are furious *against him* for his conduct. I am warned to be on my guard, as he is very capable of employing *sicarii*— this is Latin as well as Italian, so you can understand it; but I have arms, and don't mind them, thinking that I could pepper his ragamuffins if they don't come unawares, and that, if they do, one may as well end that way as another; and it would besides serve *you* as an advertisement: —

"Man may escape from rope or gun, &c.
But he who takes woman, woman, woman, &c.

"Yours.

"P. S. — I have looked over the press, but heaven knows how. Think what I have on hand and the post going out to-morrow. Do you remember the epitaph on Voltaire?

"'Ci-git l'enfant gâté,' &c.

"'Here lies the spoilt child
Of the world which he spoil'd.'

The original is in Grimm and Diderot, &c. &c. &c."

LETTER 374. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, May 24. 1820.

"I wrote to you a few days ago. There is also a letter of January last for you at Murray's, which will explain to you why I am here. Murray ought to have forwarded it long ago. I enclose you an epistle from a countrywoman of yours at Paris, which has moved my entrails. You will have the goodness, perhaps, to enquire into the truth of her story, and I will help her as far as I can, — though not in the useless way she proposes. Her letter is evidently unstudied, and so natural, that the orthography is also in a state of nature.

"Here is a poor creature, ill and solitary, who thinks, as a last resource, of translating you or me into French! Was there ever such a notion? It seems to me the consummation of despair. Pray enquire, and let me know, and, if you could draw a bill on me *here* for a few hundred francs, at your banker's, I will duly honour it, — that is, if she is not an impostor.[2] If not, let me know, that I may get something remitted by my banker Longhi, of Bologna, for I have no correspondence myself, at Paris: but tell her she must not translate; — if she does, it will be the height of ingratitude.

"I had a letter (not of the same kind, but in French and flattery) from a Madame Sophie Gail, of Paris, whom I take to be the spouse of a Gallo-Greek of that name. Who is she? and what is she? and how came she to take an interest in my *poeshie* or its author? If you know her, tell her, with my compliments, that, as I only *read* French, I have not answered her letter; but would have done so in Italian, if I had not thought it would look like an affectation. I have just

had better borrow any thing (excepting money) than the thoughts of another — they are always sure to be reclaimed; but it is very hard, having been the *lender*, to be denounced as the debtor; as is the case of Anstey *versus* Smollett. As there is 'honour amongst thieves' let there be some amongst poets, and give each his due. None can afford to give it more than Mr. Campbell himself, who, with a high reputation for originality, and a fame which cannot be shaken, is the only poet of the times (except *Rogers*) who can be reproached (and *in him* it is indeed a reproach) with having written *too little*." — See *Works*, p. 809.]

[" Ci-git l'enfant gâté du monde qu'il gâta."]

According to his desire, I waited upon this young lady, having provided myself with a rouleau of fifteen or twenty Napoleons to present to her from his Lordship; but, with a very creditable spirit, my young countrywoman declined the gift, saying that Lord Byron had mistaken the object of her application to him, which was to request that, by allowing her to have the sheets of some of his works before publication, he would enable her to prepare early translations for the French booksellers, and thus afford her the means of acquiring something towards a livelihood.

been scolding my monkey for tearing the seal of her letter, and spoiling a mock book, in which I put rose leaves. I had a civet-cat the other day, too; but it ran away, after scratching my monkey's cheek, and I am in search of it still. It was the fiercest beast I ever saw, and like * * in the face and manner.

"I have a world of things to say; but, as they are not come to a *dénouement*, I don't care to begin their history till it is wound up. After you went, I had a fever, but got well again without bark. Sir Humphry Davy was here the other day, and liked Ravenna very much. He will tell you any thing you may wish to know about the place and your humble servitor.

"Your apprehensions (arising from Scott's) were unfounded. There are *no damages* in this country, but there will probably be a separation between them, as her family, which is a principal one, by its connections, are very much against *him*, for the whole of his conduct; — and he is old and obstinate, and she is young and a woman, determined to sacrifice every thing to her affections. I have given her the best advice, viz. to stay with him, — pointing out the state of a separated woman, (for the priests won't let lovers live openly together, unless the husband sanctions it,) and making the most exquisite moral reflections, — but to no purpose. She says, 'I will stay with him, if he will let you remain with me. It is hard that I should be the only woman in Romagna who is not to have her Amico; but, if not, I will not live with him; and as for the consequences, love, &c. &c. &c.' — you know how females reason on such occasions.

"He says he has let it go on till he can do so no longer. But he wants her to stay, and dismiss me; for he doesn't like to pay back her dowry and to make an alimony. Her relations are rather for the separation, as they detest him, — indeed, so does every body. The populace and the women are, as usual, all for those who are in the wrong, viz. the lady and her lover. I should have retreated, but honour, and an erysipelas which has attacked her, prevent me, — to say nothing of love, for I love her most entirely, though not enough to persuade her to sacrifice every thing to a frenzy. 'I see how it will end; she will be the sixteenth Mrs. Shuffleton.'

"My paper is finished, and so must this letter. Yours ever, B.

"P. S. — I regret that you have not completed the Italian Fudges. Pray, how come you to be still in Paris? Murray has four or five things of mine in hand — the new Don Juan, which his back-shop synod don't admire; — a translation of the first canto of Pulci's Morgante Maggiore, excellent; — a short ditto from Dante, not so much approved; the Prophecy of Dante, very grand and worthy, &c. &c. &c.: — a furious prose answer to Blackwood's Observations on Don Juan, with a savage Defence of Pope — likely to make a row. The opinions above I quote from Murray and his Utican senate; — you will form your own, when you see the things.

"You will have no great chance of seeing me, for I begin to think I must finish in Italy. But, if you come my way, you shall have a tureen of macaroni. Pray tell me about yourself, and your intents.

"My trustees are going to lend Earl Blessington sixty thousand pounds (at six per cent.) on a Dublin mortgage. Only think of my becoming an Irish absentee!"

LETTER 375. TO MR. HOPPNER.

"Ravenna, May 25. 1820.

"A German named Ruppsecht has sent me, heaven knows why, several Deutsche Gazettes, of all which I understand neither word nor letter. I have sent you the enclosed to beg you to translate to me some remarks, which appear to be *Goethe's upon* Manfred, — and if I may judge by *two* notes of *admiration* (generally put after something ridiculous by us) and the word '*hypocondrisch*,' are any thing but favourable. I shall regret this, for I should have been proud of Goethe's good word; but I shan't alter my opinion of him, even though he should be savage.

"Will you excuse this trouble, and do me this favour? — Never mind — soften nothing — I am literary proof — having had good and evil said in most modern languages.

"Believe me, &c."

LETTER 376. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, June 1. 1820.

"I have received a Parisian letter from W. W.[1], which I prefer answering through you, if that worthy be still at Paris, and, as he says, an occasional visitor of yours. In November last he wrote to me a well-meaning letter, stating, for some reasons of his own, his belief that a re-union might be effected between Lady B. and myself. To this I answered as usual; and he sent me a second letter, repeating his notions, which letter I

[1] [Mr. Wedderburn Webster; now Sir James Webster Wedderburn, 1838.]

have never answered, having had a thousand other things to think of. He now writes as if he believed that he had offended me by touching on the topic; and I wish you to assure him that I am not at all so, — but, on the contrary, obliged by his good nature. At the same time acquaint him *the thing is impossible*. *You know this*, as well as I, — and there let it end.

"I believe that I showed you his epistle in autumn last. He asks me if I have heard of *my* 'laureat' at Paris [1], — somebody who has written 'a most sanguinary Epître' against me; but whether in French, or Dutch, or on what score, I know not, and he don't say, — except that (for my satisfaction) he says it is the best thing in the fellow's volume. If there is any thing of the kind that I *ought* to know, you will doubtless tell me. I suppose it to be something of the usual sort; — he says, he don't remember the author's name.

"I wrote to you some ten days ago, and expect an answer at your leisure.

"The separation business still continues, and all the world are implicated, including priests and cardinals. The public opinion is furious against *him*, because he ought to have cut the matter short *at first*, and not waited twelve months to begin. He has been trying at evidence, but can get none *sufficient;* for what would make fifty divorces in England won't do here — there must be the *most decided* proofs.

"It is the first cause of the kind attempted in Ravenna for these two hundred years; for, though they often separate, they assign a different motive. You know that the continental incontinent are more delicate than the English, and don't like proclaiming their coronation in a court, even when nobody doubts it.

"All her relations are furious against him. The father has challenged him — a superfluous valour, for he don't fight, though suspected of two assassinations — one of the famous Monzoni of Forli. Warning was given me not to take such long rides in the Pine Forest without being on my guard; so I take my stiletto and a pair of pistols in my pocket during my daily rides.

"I won't stir from this place till the matter is settled one way or the other. She is as femininely firm as possible; and the opinion is so much against him, that the *advocates* decline to undertake his cause, because they say that he is either a fool or a rogue — fool, if he did not discover the liaison till now; and rogue, if he did know it, and waited for some bad end, to divulge it. In short, there has been nothing like it since the days of Guido di Polenta's family, in these parts.

"If the man has me taken off, like Polonius 'say, he made a good end,' — for a melodrame. The principal security is, that he has not the courage to spend twenty scudi — the average price of a clean-handed bravo — otherwise there is no want of opportunity, for I ride about the woods every evening, with one servant, and sometimes an acquaintance, who latterly looks a little queer in solitary bits of bushes.

"Good bye. — Write to yours ever, &c."

LETTER 377. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, June 7. 1820.

"Enclosed is something which will interest you, to wit, the opinion of *the* greatest man of Germany — perhaps of Europe — upon one of the great men of your advertisements, (all 'famous hands,' as Jacob Tonson [2] used to say of his ragamuffins,) — in short, a critique of *Goethe's* upon *Manfred*. There is the original, an English translation, and an Italian one; keep them all in your archives, — for the opinions of such a man as Goethe, whether favourable or not, are always interesting — and this is more so, as favourable. His *Faust* I never read, for I don't know German; but Matthew Monk Lewis, in 1816, at Coligny, translated most of it to me *vivâ voce*, and I was naturally much struck with it; but it was the *Staubach* and the *Jungfrau*, and something else, much more than Faustus, that made me write Manfred. The first scene, however, and that of Faustus are very similar. Acknowledge this letter.

"Yours ever.

"P. S. — I have received *Ivanhoe; — good*. Pray send me some tooth-powder and tincture of myrrh, by *Waite*, &c. Ricciardetto should have been *translated literally, or not at all*. As to puffing *Whistlecraft*, it *won't* do.[3] I'll tell you why some day or other. Cornwall's a poet, but spoilt by the detestable schools of the day. Mrs. Hemans is a poet

[1] M. Lamartine. [See *antè*, p. 413.]

[2] ["Perhaps I should be much better pleased, if I were told you called me your little friend, than if you complimented me with the title of a 'great genius,' or an 'eminent hand,' as Jacob does all his authors." — *Pope to Steele.*]

[3] [Probably this alludes to an article on Whistlecraft, in the Quart. Rev. vol. xxi. p. 503.; in which the reviewer says, "About a hundred years ago, a poem, bearing a certain degree of affinity to the 'Specimen,' was produced by Monsignor Forteguerri, a writer who in genius and means was far inferior to the English Poet," &c. &c.]

also, but too stiltified and apostrophic, — and quite wrong. Men died calmly before the Christian era, and since, without Christianity; witness the Romans, and, lately, Thistlewood[1], Sandt[2], and Louvel[3] — *men who ought to have been weighed down with their crimes, even had they believed.* A deathbed is a matter of nerves and constitution, and not of religion. Voltaire was frightened, Frederick of Prussia not: Christians the same, according to their strength rather than their creed. What does Helga Herbert[4] mean by his stanza? which is octave got drunk or gone mad. He ought to have his ears boxed with Thor's hammer for rhyming so fantastically."[5]

The following is the article from Goethe's "Kunst und Alterthum," enclosed in this letter. The grave confidence with which the venerable critic traces the fancies of his brother poet to real persons and events, making no difficulty even of a double murder at Florence to furnish grounds for his theory, affords an amusing instance of the disposition so prevalent throughout Europe, to picture Byron as a man of marvels and mysteries, as well in his life as his poetry. To these exaggerated, or wholly false notions of him, the numerous fictions palmed upon the world of his romantic tours and wonderful adventures in places he never saw, and with persons that never existed[6], have, no doubt, considerably contributed; and the consequence is, so utterly out of truth and nature are the representations of his life and character long current upon the Continent, that it may be questioned whether the real "flesh and blood" hero of these pages, — the social, practical-minded, and, with all his faults and eccentricities, *English* Lord Byron, — may not, to the over-exalted imaginations of most of his foreign admirers, appear but an ordinary, unromantic, and prosaic personage.

[1] [Arthur Thistlewood, executed at the Old Bailey, May 1. 1820, for High Treason.]

[2] [Charles Sandt, the assassin of Kotzebue, at Manheim, in March 1819. After the murder he exclaimed "God, I thank thee, for having permitted me to accomplish this act!" and plunged the bloody poniard in his own breast. He went to the place of execution as to a fête, and his last words were, that he "died for his country."]

[3] [The murderer of the Duc de Berri, in February 1820.]

[4] [The Hon. William Herbert, uncle to the Earl of Carnarvon, author of "Helga," "Icelandic Translations," &c. &c.]

"GOETHE ON MANFRED.

[1820.]

"Byron's tragedy, Manfred, was to me a wonderful phenomenon, and one that closely touched me. This singular intellectual poet has taken my Faustus to himself, and extracted from it the strongest nourishment for his hypochondriac humour. He has made use of the impelling principles in his own way, for his own purposes, so that no one of them remains the same; and it is particularly on this account that I cannot enough admire his genius. The whole is in this way so completely formed anew, that it would be an interesting task for the critic to point out not only the alterations he has made, but their degree of resemblance with, or dissimilarity to, the original; in the course of which I cannot deny that the gloomy heat of an unbounded and exuberant despair becomes at last oppressive to us. Yet is the dissatisfaction we feel always connected with esteem and admiration.

"We find thus in this tragedy the quintessence of the most astonishing talent born to be its own tormentor. The character of Lord Byron's life and poetry hardly permits a just and equitable appreciation. He has often enough confessed what it is that torments him. He has repeatedly pourtrayed it; and scarcely any one feels compassion for this intolerable suffering, over which he is ever laboriously ruminating. There are, properly speaking, two females whose phantoms for ever haunt him, and which, in this piece also, perform principal parts — one under the name of Astarte, the other without form or actual presence, and merely a voice. Of the horrid occurrence which took place with the former the following is related: — When a bold and enterprising young man, he won the affections of a Florentine lady. Her husband discovered the amour, and murdered his wife; but the murderer was the same night found dead in the street, and there was no one on whom any suspicion could be attached. Lord

[5] ["Herbert shall wield Thor's hammer, and sometimes,
In gratitude, thoul't praise his rugged rhymes."
English Bards, &c.]

[6] Of this kind are the accounts, filled with all sorts of circumstantial wonders, of his residence in the island of Mytilene; — his voyages to Sicily, — to Ithaca, with the Countess Guiccioli, &c. &c. But the most absurd, perhaps, of all these fabrications, are the stories told by Pouqueville, of the poet's religious conferences in the cell of Father Paul, at Athens; and the still more unconscionable fiction in which Rizo has indulged, in giving the details of a pretended theatrical scene, got up (according to this poetical historian) between Lord Byron and the Archbishop of Arta, at the tomb of Botzaris, in Missolonghi.

Byron removed from Florence, and these spirits haunted him all his life after.

"This romantic incident is rendered highly probable by innumerable allusions to it in his poems. As, for instance, when turning his sad contemplations inwards, he applies to himself the fatal history of the king of Sparta. It is as follows: — Pausanias, a Lacedemonian general, acquires glory by the important victory at Platæa, but afterwards forfeits the confidence of his countrymen through his arrogance, obstinacy, and secret intrigues with the enemies of his country. This man draws upon himself the heavy guilt of innocent blood, which attends him to his end; for, while commanding the fleet of the allied Greeks, in the Black Sea, he is inflamed with a violent passion for a Byzantine maiden. After long resistance, he at length obtains her from her parents, and she is to be delivered up to him at night. She modestly desires the servant to put out the lamp, and, while groping her way in the dark, she overturns it. Pausanias is awakened from his sleep — apprehensive of an attack from murderers, he seizes his sword, and destroys his mistress. The horrid sight never leaves him. Her shade pursues him unceasingly, and he implores for aid in vain from the gods and the exorcising priests.

"That poet must have a lacerated heart who selects such a scene from antiquity, appropriates it to himself, and burdens his tragic image with it. The following soliloquy, which is overladen with gloom and a weariness of life, is, by this remark, rendered intelligible. We recommend it as an exercise to all friends of declamation. Hamlet's soliloquy appears improved upon here."[1]

LETTER 378. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, June 9. 1820.

"Galignani has just sent me the Paris edition of your works (which I wrote to order), and I am glad to see my old friends with a French face. I have been skimming and dipping, in and over them, like a swallow, and as pleased as one. It is the first time that I had seen the Melodies without music; and, I don't know how, but I can't read in a music-book — the crotchets confound the words in my head, though I recollect them perfectly when *sung*. Music assists my memory through the ear, not through the eye; I mean, that her quavers perplex me upon paper, but they are a help when heard. And thus I was glad to see the words without their borrowed robes; — to my mind they look none the worse for their nudity.

"The biographer has made a botch of your life — calling your father 'a *venerable old* gentleman,' and prattling of 'Addison,' and 'dowager countesses.' If that damned fellow was to *write my* life, I would certainly *take his*. And then, at the Dublin dinner, you have 'made a speech' (do you recollect, at Douglas K.'s, 'Sir, he made me a speech?') too complimentary to the 'living poets,' and somewhat redolent of universal praise. I am but too well off in it, but * * *.

"You have not sent me any poetical or personal news of yourself. Why don't you complete an Italian Tour of the Fudges? I have just been turning over Little, which I knew by heart in 1803, being then in my fifteenth summer. Heigho! I believe all the mischief I have ever done, or sung, has been owing to that confounded book of yours.

"In my last I told you of a cargo of 'Poeshie,' which I had sent to M. at his own impatient desire; — and, now he has got it, he don't like it, and demurs. Perhaps he is right. I have no great opinion of any of my last shipment, except a translation from Pulci, which is word for word, and verse for verse.

"I am in the third act of a Tragedy; but whether it will be finished or not, I know not: I have, at this present, too many passions of my own on hand to do justice to those of the dead. Besides the vexations mentioned in my last, I have incurred a quarrel with the Pope's carabiniers, or gens d'armerie, who have petitioned the Cardinal against my liveries, as resembling too nearly their own lousy uniform. They particularly object to the epaulettes, which all the world with us have on upon gala days. My liveries are of the colours conforming to my arms, and have been the family hue since the year 1066.

"I have sent a tranchant reply, as you may suppose; and have given to understand that, if any soldados of that respectable corps insult my servants, I will do likewise by their gallant commanders; and I have directed my ragamuffins, six in number, who are tolerably savage, to defend themselves, in case of aggression; and, on holidays and gaudy days, I shall arm the whole set, including myself, in case of accidents or treachery. I used to play pretty well at the broad-sword, once upon a time, at Angelo's; but I should like the pistol, our national buccaneer weapon, better, though I am out of practice at present. However, I can 'wink and hold out mine iron.' It makes me think (the whole

[1] The critic here subjoins the soliloquy from Manfred, beginning "We are the fools of time and terror," in which the allusion to Pausanias occurs.

thing does) of Romeo and Juliet — 'now, Gregory, remember thy *swashing* blow.'

"All these feuds, however, with the Cavalier for his wife, and the troopers for my liveries, are very tiresome to a quiet man, who does his best to please all the world, and longs for fellowship and good will. Pray write. I am yours, &c."

LETTER 379. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, July 13. 1820.

"To remove or increase your Irish anxiety about my being 'in a wisp[1],' I answer your letter forthwith; premising that, as I am a '*Will* of the wisp,' I may chance to flit out of it. But, first, a word on the Memoir; — I have no objection, nay, I would rather that *one* correct copy was taken and deposited in honourable hands, in case of accidents happening to the original; for you know that I have none, and have never even *re*-read, nor, indeed, *read* at all what is there written; I only know that I wrote it with the fullest intention to be 'faithful and true' in my narrative, but *not* impartial — no, by the Lord! I can't pretend to be that, while I feel. But I wish to give every body concerned the opportunity to contradict or correct me.

"I have no objection to any proper person seeing what is there written, — seeing it was written, like every thing else, for the purpose of being read, however much many writings may fail in arriving at that object.

"With regard to 'the wisp,' the Pope has pronounced *their separation*. The decree came yesterday from Babylon, — it was *she* and *her friends* who demanded it, on the grounds of her husband's (the noble Count Cavalier's) extraordinary usage. *He* opposed it with all his might because of the alimony, which has been assigned, with all her goods, chattels, carriage, &c. to be restored by him. In Italy they can't divorce. He insisted on her giving me up, and he would forgive every thing, — * * * * * * * * * * * * But, in this country, the very courts hold such proofs in abhorrence, the Italians being as much more delicate in public than the English, as they are more passionate in private.

"The friends and relatives, who are numerous and powerful, reply to him — '*You*, yourself, are either fool or knave, — fool, if you did not see the consequences of the approximation of these two young persons, — knave, if you connive at it. Take your choice, — but don't break out (after twelve months of the closest intimacy, under your own eyes and positive sanction) with a scandal, which can only make you ridiculous and her unhappy.'

"He swore that he thought our intercourse was purely amicable, and that *I* was more partial to him than to her, till melancholy testimony proved the contrary. To this they answer, that 'Will of *this* wisp' was not an unknown person, and that 'clamosa Fama' had not proclaimed the purity of my morals; — that *her* brother, a year ago, wrote from Rome to warn him that his wife would infallibly be led astray by this ignis fatuus, unless he took proper measures, all of which he neglected to take, &c. &c.

"Now he says that he encouraged my return to Ravenna, to see '*in quanti piedi di acqua siamo*,' and he has found enough to drown him in. In short,

" 'Ce ne fut pas le tout; sa femme se plaignit —
Procès — La parenté se joint en excuse et dit
Que du *Docteur* venoit tout le mauvais ménage;
Que cet homme étoit fou, que sa femme étoit sage.
On fit casser le mariage.'

It is but to let the women alone, in the way of conflict, for they are sure to win against the field. She returns to her father's house, and I can only see her under great restrictions — such is the custom of the country. The relations behave very well: — I offered any settlement, but they refused to accept it, and swear she *shan't* live with G. (as he has tried to prove her faithless), but that he shall maintain her; and, in fact, a judgment to this effect came yesterday. I am, of course, in an awkward situation enough.

"I have heard no more of the carabiniers who protested against my liveries. They are not popular, those same soldiers, and, in a small row, the other night, one was slain, another wounded, and divers put to flight, by some of the Romagnuole youth, who are dexterous, and somewhat liberal of the knife. The perpetrators are not discovered, but I hope and believe that none of my ragamuffins were in it, though they are somewhat savage, and secretly armed, like most of the inhabitants. It is their way, and saves sometimes a good deal of litigation.

"There is a revolution at Naples. If so, it will probably leave a card at Ravenna in its way to Lombardy.

"Your publishers seem to have used you like mine. M. has shuffled, and almost insinuated that my last productions are *dull*. Dull, sir! — damme, dull! I believe he is right. He begs for the completion of my tragedy of Marino Faliero, none of which is yet gone to England. The fifth act is nearly completed, but it is dreadfully long — 40

[1] An Irish phrase for being in a scrape.

sheets of long paper of 4 pages each — about 150 when printed; but 'so full of pastime and prodigality' that I think it will do.

"Pray send and publish your *Pome* upon me; and don't be afraid of praising me too highly. I shall pocket my blushes.

"'Not actionable!'— *Chantre d'enfer!* [1] —by * * that's 'a speech,' and I won't put up with it. A pretty title to give a man for doubting if there be any such place!

"So my Gail is gone — and Miss Mahony won't take money. I am very glad of it — I like to be generous free of expense. But beg her not to translate me.

"Oh, pray tell Galignani that I shall send him a screed of doctrine if he don't be more punctual. Somebody *regularly detains two*, and sometimes *four*, of his Messengers by the way. Do, pray, entreat him to be more precise. News are worth money in this remote kingdom of the Ostrogoths.

"Pray, reply. I should like much to share some of your Champagne and La Fitte, but I am too Italian for Paris in general. Make Murray send my letter to you — it is full of *epigrams*.

"Yours, &c."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1820.

RAVENNA. — DEPARTURE OF MADAME GUICCIOLI. — COMPLETION OF MARINO FALIERO. — MILMAN'S FALL OF JERUSALEM. — ADA'S PICTURE. — SCHOOL AND COLLEGE CONTEMPORARIES. — ENGLISH IN ITALY. — QUEEN CAROLINE AND MR. HOBY. — ANASTASIUS. — ADVICE TO JULIA. — MITCHELL'S ARISTOPHANES. — RUMOURED ARRIVAL IN LONDON. — SIR ROBERT PEEL'S ANECDOTE. — UGO FOSCOLO. — JOHN KEATS. — MISS HOLFORD. — WASHINGTON IRVING. — HOGG'S TALES. — DEDICATION OF MARINO FALIERO TO GOETHE.

In the separation that had now taken place between Count Guiccioli and his wife, it was one of the conditions that the lady should, in future, reside under the paternal roof; — in consequence of which, Madame Guiccioli, on the 16th of July, left Ravenna and retired to a villa belonging to Count Gamba, about fifteen miles distant from that city. Here Lord Byron occasionally visited her — about once or twice, perhaps, in a month — passing the rest of his time in perfect solitude. To a mind like his, whose world was within itself, such a mode of life could have been neither new nor unwelcome; but to the woman, young and admired, whose acquaintance with the world and its pleasures had but just begun, this change was, it must be confessed, most sudden and trying. Count Guiccioli was rich, and, as a young wife, she had gained absolute power over him. She was proud, and his station placed her among the highest in Ravenna. They had talked of travelling to Naples, Florence, Paris, — and every luxury, in short, that wealth could command was at her disposal.

All this she now voluntarily and determinedly sacrificed for Byron. Her splendid home abandoned — her relations all openly at war with her — her kind father but tolerating, from fondness, what he could not approve — she was now, upon a pittance of 200*l.* a year, living apart from the world, her sole occupation the task of educating herself for her illustrious friend, and her sole reward the few brief glimpses of him which their now restricted intercourse allowed. Of the man who could inspire and keep alive so devoted a feeling, it may be pronounced with confidence that he could *not* have been such as, in the freaks of his own wayward humour, he represented himself; while, on the lady's side, the whole history of her attachment goes to prove how completely an Italian woman, whether by nature or from her social position, is led to invert the usual course of such frailties among ourselves, and, weak in resisting the first impulses of passion, to reserve the whole strength of her character for a display of constancy and devotedness afterwards.

LETTER 380. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, July 17. 1820.

"I have received some books, and Quarterlies, and Edinburghs, for all which I am grateful: they contain all I know of England, except by Galignani's newspaper.

"The tragedy is completed, but now comes the task of copy and correction. It is very long, (42 *sheets* of long paper, of four pages each,) and I believe must make more than 140 or 150 pages, besides many historical extracts as notes, which I mean to append. History is closely followed. Dr. Moore's account is in some respects false, and in all foolish and flippant. *None* of the chronicles (and I have consulted Sanuto, Sandi, Navagero, and an anonymous Siege of Zara, besides the histories of Laugier, Daru, Sismondi, &c.) state, or even hint,

[1] The title given him by M. Lamartine, in one of his Poems. [See p. 413.]

that he begged his life; they merely say that he did not deny the conspiracy. He was one of their great men, — commanded at the siege of Zara, — beat 80,000 Hungarians, killing 8000, and at the same time kept the town he was besieging in order, — took Capo d'Istria, — was ambassador at Genoa, Rome, and finally Doge, where he fell for treason, in attempting to alter the government, by what Sanuto calls a judgment on him, for, many years before (when Podesta and Captain of Treviso), having knocked down a bishop, who was sluggish in carrying the host at a procession. He 'saddles him,' as Thwackum did Square, 'with a judgment;' but he does not mention whether he had been punished at the time for what would appear very strange, even now, and must have been still more so in an age of papal power and glory. Sanuto says, that Heaven took away his senses for this buffet in his old days, and induced him to conspire. — 'Però fù permesso che il Faliero perdette l'intelletto,' &c.

"I do not know what your parlour-boarders will think of the Drama I have founded upon this extraordinary event. The only similar one in history is the story of Agis, King of Sparta, a prince *with* the commons against the aristocracy, and losing his life therefor. But it shall be sent when copied.

"I should be glad to know why your Quarter*ing* Reviewers, at the close of 'The Fall of Jerusalem,' accuse me of Manicheism? a compliment to which the sweetener of 'one of the mightiest spirits' by no means reconciles me. The poem they review is very noble; but could they not do justice to the writer without converting him into my religious antidote? I am not a Manichean, nor an *Any*-chean. I should like to know what harm my 'poeshies' have done? I can't tell what people mean by making me a hobgoblin."[1]

LETTER 381. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, August 31. 1820.

"I have '*put my soul*' into the tragedy (as you *if* it); but you know that there are d—d souls as well as tragedies. Recollect that it is not a political play, though it may look like it: it is strictly historical. Read the history and judge.

"Ada's picture is her mother's. I am glad of it — the mother made a good daughter. Send me Gifford's opinion, and never mind the Archbishop. I can neither send you away, nor give you a hundred pistoles, nor a better taste: I send you a tragedy, and you ask for 'facetious epistles;' a little like your predecessor, who advised Dr. Prideaux to 'put some more humour into his Life of Mahomet.'

"Bankes is a wonderful fellow. There is hardly one of my school or college contemporaries that has not turned out more or less celebrated. Peel, Palmerstone, Bankes, Hobhouse, Tavistock, Bob Mills, Douglas Kinnaird, &c. &c. have all talked and been talked about. He Mired more than he wrote

"We are here going to fight a little next month, if the Huns don't cross the Po, and probably if they do. I can't say more now. If any thing happens, you have matter for a posthumous work, in MS.; so pray be civil. Depend upon it, there will be savage work, if once they begin here. The French courage proceeds from vanity, the German from phlegm, the Turkish from fanaticism and opium, the Spanish from pride, the English from coolness, the Dutch from obstinacy, the Russian from insensibility, but the *Italian* from *anger;* so you'll see that they will spare nothing."

LETTER 382. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, August 31. 1820.

"D—n your 'mezzo cammin[2]' — you should say 'the prime of life,' a much more consolatory phrase. Besides, it is not correct. I was born in 1788, and consequently am but thirty-two. You are mistaken on another point. The 'Sequin Box' never came into requisition, nor is it likely to do so. It were better that it had, for then a man is not *bound*, you know. As to reform, I did reform — what would you have? 'Rebellion lay in his way, and he found it.' I verily believe that nor you, nor any man of poetical temperament, can avoid a strong passion of some kind. It is the poetry of life. What should I have known or written,

[1] ["Mr. Milman," says Bishop Heber "has much to add to his own reputation and that of his country. Remarkably as Britain is now distinguished by its living poetical talent, our time has need of him. For sacred poetry (a walk which Milton alone has hitherto successfully trodden) his taste, his peculiar talents, his education, and his profession appear alike to designate him; and, while by a strange predilection for the worser half of Manicheism, one of the mightiest spirits of the age has, apparently, devoted himself and his genius to the adornment and extension of evil, we may be well exhilarated by the accession of a new and potent ally to the cause of human virtue and happiness, whose example may furnish an additional evidence that purity and weakness are not synonymous, and that the torch of genius never burns so bright as when duly kindled at the altar." — *Quart. Rev. on the Fall of Jerusalem*, vol. xxiii. p. 225.]

[2] I had congratulated him upon arriving at what Dante calls the "mezzo cammin" of life, the age of thirty-three.

had I been a quiet, mercantile politician, or a lord in waiting? A man must travel, and turmoil, or there is no existence. Besides, I only meant to be a Cavalier Servente, and had no idea it would turn out a romance, in the Anglo fashion.

"However, I suspect I know a thing or two of Italy — more than Lady Morgan has picked up in her posting. What do Englishmen know of Italians beyond their museums and saloons — and some hack * *, *en passant?* Now, I have lived in the heart of their houses, in parts of Italy freshest and least influenced by strangers, — have seen and become (*pars magna fui*) a portion of their hopes, and fears, and passions, and am almost inoculated into a family. This is to see men and things as they are.

"You say that I called you 'quiet'[1] — I don't recollect any thing of the sort. On the contrary, you are always in scrapes.

"What think you of the Queen? I hear Mr. Hoby says, 'that it makes him weep to see her, she reminds him so much of Jane Shore.'

" Mr. Hoby the bootmaker's heart is quite sore,
For seeing the Queen makes him think of Jane Shore;
And, in fact, * *

Pray excuse this ribaldry. What is your poem about? Write and tell me all about it and you.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — Did you write the lively quiz on Peter Bell?[2] It has wit enough to be yours, and almost too much to be any body else's now going. It was in Galignani the other day or week."

LETTER 383. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, September 7. 1820.

"In correcting the proofs you must refer to the *manuscript*, because there are in it *various readings*. Pray attend to this, and choose what Gifford thinks best. Let me hear what he thinks of the whole.

"You speak of Lady * *'s illness; she is not of those who die: — the amiable only do; and those whose death would *do good* live. Whenever she is pleased to return, it may be presumed she will take her 'divining rod' along with her; it may be of use to her at home, as well as to the 'rich man' of the Evangelists.

"Pray do not let the papers paragraph me back to England. They may say what they please, any loathsome abuse but that. Contradict it.

"My last letters will have taught you to expect an explosion here: it was primed and loaded, but they hesitated to fire the train. One of the cities shirked from the league. I cannot write more at large for a thousand reasons. Our 'puir hill folk' offered to strike, and raise the first banner, but Bologna paused; and now 'tis autumn, and the season half over. 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!' The Huns are on the Po; but if once they pass it on their way to Naples, all Italy will be behind them. The dogs — the wolves — may they perish like the host of Sennacherib! If you want to publish the Prophecy of Dante, you never will have a better time."

LETTER 384. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, Sept. 11. 1820.

"Here is another historical *note* for you. I want to be as near truth as the drama can be.

"Last post I sent you a note fierce as Faliero himself[3], in answer to a trashy tourist, who pretends that he could have been introduced to me. Let me have a proof of it, that I may cut its lava into some shape.

"What Gifford says is very consolatory (of the first act). 'English, sterling *genuine English*,' is a desideratum amongst you, and I am glad that I have got so much left; though Heaven knows how I retain it: I *hear* none but from my valet, and his is *Nottinghamshire:* and I *see* none but in your new publications, and theirs is *no* language at all, but jargon. Even your 'New Jerusalem' is terribly stilted and affected, with '*very, very*' so soft and pamby.

"Oh! if ever I *do* come amongst you again, I will give you such a 'Baviad and Mæviad!' not *as* good as the old, but even *better merited*. There never was such a *set* as your *ragamuffins* (I mean *not* yours only, but every body's). What with the Cockneys, and the Lakers, and the *followers* of Scott, and Moore, and Byron, you are in the very uttermost decline and degradation of literature. I can't think of it without all the remorse of a murderer. I wish that Johnson were alive again to crush them!"

[1] I had mistaken the concluding words of his letter of the 9th of June.

[2] [The very clever 'quiz' here alluded to was the production of John Hamilton Reynolds, Esq. See *antè*, p. 228.]

[3] The angry note against English travellers appended to this tragedy, in consequence of an assertion made by some recent tourist, that he (or, as it afterwards turned out, *she*) "had repeatedly declined an introduction to Lord Byron while in Italy."

LETTER 385. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, Sept. 14. 1820.

"What! not a line? Well, have it your own way.

"I wish you would inform Perry, that his stupid paragraph[1] is the cause of all my newspapers being stopped in Paris. The fools believe me in your infernal country, and have not sent on their gazettes, so that I know nothing of your beastly trial of the Queen.

"I cannot avail myself of Mr. Gifford's remarks, because I have received none, except on the first act.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — Do, pray, beg the editors of papers to say any thing blackguard they please; but not to put me amongst their arrivals. They do me more mischief by such nonsense than all their abuse can do."

LETTER 386. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, Sept. 21. 1820.

"So you are at your old tricks again. This is the second packet I have received unaccompanied by a single line of good, bad, or indifferent. It is strange that you have never forwarded any further observations of Gifford's. How am I to alter or amend, if I hear no further? or does this silence mean that it is well enough as it is, or too bad to be repaired? If the last, why do you not say so at once, instead of playing pretty, while you know that soon or late you must out with the truth.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — My sister tells me that you sent to her to enquire where I was, believing in my arrival, '*driving a curricle*,' &c. &c. into Palace-yard. Do you think me a coxcomb or a madman, to be capable of such an exhibition? My sister knew me better, and told you that could not be me. You might as well have thought me entering on 'a pale horse,' like Death in the Revelations."

LETTER 387. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, Sept. 23. 1820.

"Get from Mr. Hobhouse, and send me a proof (with the Latin) of my Hints from Horace: it has now the *nonum prematur in annum* complete for its production, being written at Athens in 1811. I have a notion that, with some omissions of names and passages, it will do; and I could put my late observations *for* Pope amongst the notes, with the date of 1820, and so on. As far as versification goes, it is good; and, on looking back to what I wrote about that period, I am astonished to see how *little* I have trained on. I wrote better then than now; but that comes of my having fallen into the atrocious bad taste of the times. If I can trim it for present publication, what with the other things you have of mine, you will have a volume or two of *variety* at least, for there will be all measures, styles, and topics, whether good or no. I am anxious to hear what Gifford thinks of the tragedy; pray let me know. I really do not know what to think myself.

"If the Germans pass the Po, they will be treated to a mass out of the Cardinal de Retz's *Breviary*. * * is a fool, and could not understand this: Frere will. It is as pretty a conceit as you would wish to see upon a summer's day.

"Nobody here believes a word of the evidence against the Queen. The very mob cry shame against their countrymen, and say that for half the money spent upon the trial, any testimony whatever may be brought out of Italy. This you may rely upon as fact. I told you as much before. As to what travellers report, what *are travellers?* Now I have *lived* among the Italians — not *Florenced*, and *Romed*, and galleried, and conversationed it for a few months, and then home again; but been of their families, and friendships, and feuds, and loves, and councils, and correspondence, in a part of Italy least known to foreigners, — and have been amongst them of all classes, from the Conte to the Contadine; and you may be sure of what I say to you.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 388. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, Sept. 28. 1820.

"I thought that I had told you long ago, that it *never* was intended nor written with any view to the stage. I have said so in the preface too. It is too long and too regular for your stage, the persons too few, and the *unity* too much observed. It is more like a play of Alfieri's than of your stage (I say this humbly in speaking of that great man); but there is poetry, and it is equal to Man-

[1] ["We rejoice to learn that Lord Byron yesterday arrived in town from Italy. The noble lord has finished a tragedy, which we should hope will be brought out at Drury Lane theatre, before Mr. Kean's departure for America." — *Morn. Chron.* Aug. 18.]

fred, though I know not what esteem is held of Manfred.

"I have now been nearly as long *out* of England as I was there during the time when I saw you frequently. I came home July 14th, 1811, and left again April 25th, 1816: so that Sept. 28th, 1820, brings me within a very few months of the same duration of time of my stay and my absence. In course, I can know nothing of the public taste and feelings, but from what I glean from letters, &c. Both seem to be as bad as possible.

"I thought *Anastasius*[1] excellent: did I not say so? Matthews's Diary most excellent; it, and Forsyth, and parts of Hobhouse, are all we have of truth or sense upon Italy. The Letter to Julia[2] very good indeed. I do not despise Mrs. Hemans; but if she knit blue stockings instead of wearing them, it would be better. *You* are taken in by that false stilted trashy style, which is a mixture of all the styles of the day, which are *all bombastic* (I don't except my *own* — no one has done more through negligence to corrupt the language); but it is neither English nor poetry. Time will show.

"I am sorry Gifford has made no further remarks beyond the first act: does he think all the English equally sterling as he thought the first? You did right to send the proofs: I was a fool; but I do really detest the sight of proofs: it is an absurdity; but comes from laziness.

"You can steal the two Juans into the world quietly, tagged to the others. The play as you will — the Dante too; but the *Pulci* I am proud of: it is superb; you have no such translation. It is the best thing I ever did in my life. I wrote the play, from beginning to end, and not a *single scene without interruption*, and being obliged to break off in the middle; for I had my hands full, and my head, too, just then; so it can be no great shakes — I mean the play; and the head too, if you like.

"P. S. — Politics here still savage and uncertain. However, we are all in our 'bandaliers,' to join the 'Highlanders if they cross the Forth,' *i. e.* to crush the Austrians if they cross the Po. The rascals! — and that dog Liverpool, to say their subjects are *happy!* If ever I come back, I'll work some of these ministers.

"Sept. 29.

"I open my letter to say, that on reading *more* of the four volumes on Italy[3], where the author says 'declined an introduction,' I perceive (*horresco referens*) it is written by a WOMAN!!! In that case you must suppress my note and answer, and all I have said about the book and the writer. I never dreamed of it until now, in my extreme wrath at that precious note. I can only say that I am sorry that a lady should say any thing of the kind. What I would have said to one of the other sex you know already. Her book too (as a *she* book) is not a bad one; but she evidently don't know the Italians, or rather don't like them, and forgets the *causes* of their misery and profligacy (*Matthews* and *Forsyth* are your men for truth and tact), and has gone over Italy in *company* — *always* a *bad* plan: you must be *alone* with people to know them well. Ask her, who was the '*descendant of Lady M. W. Montague*,' and by whom? by Algarotti?

"I suspect that, in Marino Faliero, you and yours won't like the *politics*, which are perilous to you in these times; but recollect that it is *not a political* play, and that I was obliged to put into the mouths of the characters the sentiments upon which they acted. I hate all things written like Pizarro, to represent France, England, and so forth. All I have done is meant to be purely Venetian, even to the very prophecy of its present state.

"Your Angles in general know little of the *Italians*, who detest them for their numbers and their Genoa treachery. Besides, the English travellers have not been composed of the best company. How could they? — out of 100,000, how many gentlemen were there, or honest men?

"Mitchell's Aristophanes is excellent. — Send me the rest of it.[4]

"These fools will force me to write a book about Italy myself, to give them 'the loud lie.' They prate about assassination; what is it

[1] ["Anastasius; or Memoirs of a Modern Greek," by the late Mr. Thomas Hope, published in 1820. Mr. Hope died in February 1831.]

[2] [Mr. Luttrell's "Advice to Julia, a Letter in Rhyme." See Quart. Rev. vol. xxiii. p. 505.]

[3] ["Sketches descriptive of Italy, in the Years 1816, 1817, with a brief Account of Travels in various Parts of France and Switzerland," by Miss Jane Waldie.]

[4] [The first volume of "The Comedies of Aristophanes, by Thomas Mitchell, A.M., late Fellow of Sidney-Sussex College, Cambridge," appeared in 1820. "Since the publication of Mr. Mitford," says the Quarterly Review, "nothing has appeared so calculated to convey a true impression of the character of antiquity, or to efface those theatrical and pedantic notions which are become the source, not only of infinite absurdity and distortion of mind among scholars, but of much practical mischief and error, in proportion as the blunders of the learned are diffused among the vulgar." — Vol. xxiii. p. 505.]

but the origin of duelling—and '*a wild justice*,' as Lord Bacon calls it? It is the fount of the modern point of honour in what the laws can't or *won't* reach. Every man is liable to it more or less, according to circumstances or place. For instance, I am living here exposed to it daily, for I have happened to make a powerful and unprincipled man my enemy;—and I never sleep the worse for it, or ride in less solitary places, because precaution is useless, and one thinks of it as of a disease which may or may not strike. It is true that there are those here, who, if he did, would 'live to think on't;' but that would not awake my bones: I should be sorry if it would, were they once at rest."

LETTER 389. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 8bre 6°, 1820.

"You will have now received all the acts, corrected, of the Marino Faliero. What you say of the 'bet of 100 guineas' made by some one who says that he saw me last week, reminds me of what happened in 1810: you can easily ascertain the fact, and it is an odd one.

"In the latter end of 1811, I met one evening at the Alfred my old school and form fellow, (for we were within two of each other, *he* the higher, though both very near the top of our remove,) *Peel*, the Irish secretary. He told me that, in 1810, he met me, as he thought, in St. James's Street, but we passed without speaking. He mentioned this, and it was denied as impossible, I being then in Turkey. A day or two afterward, he pointed out to his brother a person on the opposite side of the way:—'There,' said he, 'is the man whom I took for Byron.' His brother instantly answered, 'Why, it *is* Byron, and no one else.' But this is not all:—I was *seen* by somebody to *write down my name* amongst the enquirers after the King's health, then attacked by insanity. Now, at this very period, as nearly as I could make out, I was ill of a *strong fever* at Patras, caught in the marshes near Olympia, from the *malaria*. If I had died there, this would have been a new ghost story for you. You can easily make out the accuracy of this from Peel himself, who told it in detail. I suppose you will be of the opinion of Lucretius, who (denies the immortality of the soul, but) asserts that from the 'flying off the surfaces of bodies perpetually, these surfaces or cases, like the coats of an onion, are sometimes seen entire when they are separated from it, so that the shapes and shadows of both the dead and absent are frequently beheld.'

"But if they are, are their coats and waistcoats also seen? I do not disbelieve that we may be two by some unconscious process, to a certain sign; but which of these two I happen at present to be, I leave you to decide. I only hope that *t'other me* behaves like a gemman.

"I wish you would get Peel asked how far I am accurate in my recollection of what he told me; for I don't like to say such things without authority.

"I am not sure that I was *not spoken* with; but this also you can ascertain. I have written to you such letters that I stop.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S.—Last year (in June, 1819, I met at Count Mosti's, at Ferrara, an Italian who asked me 'If I knew Lord Byron?' I told him *no* (no one knows himself, *you* know). 'Then,' says he, 'I do; I met him at Naples the other day.' I pulled out my card and asked him if that was the way he spelt his name: he answered, *yes*. I suspect that it was a blackguard navy surgeon who attended a young travelling madam about, and passed himself for a lord at the post-houses. He was a vulgar dog—quite of the cock-pit order—and a precious representative I must have had of him, if it was even so; but I don't know. He passed himself off as a gentleman, and squired about a Countess * * (of this place), then at Venice, an ugly battered woman, of bad morals even for Italy."

LETTER 390. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 8bre 8°, 1820.

"Foscolo's letter is exactly the thing wanted; firstly, because he is a man of genius; and, next, because he is an Italian, and therefore the best judge of Italics. Besides,

"He's more an antique Roman than a Dane;

that is, he is more of the ancient Greek than of the modern Italian. Though, 'somewhat,' as Dugald Dalgetty says, 'too wild and salvage' (like 'Ronald of the Mist'), 'tis a wonderful man, and my friends Hobhouse and Rose both swear by him; and they are good judges of men and of Italian humanity.

"Here are in all *two* worthy voices gain'd:

Gifford says it is good 'sterling genuine English,' and Foscolo says that the characters are right Venetian. Shakspeare and Otway had a million of advantages over me, besides the incalculable one of being *dead* from one to two centuries, and having been both born blackguards (which ARE such

attractions to the gentle living reader); let me then preserve the only one which I could possibly have — that of having been at Venice, and entered more into the local spirit of it. I claim no more.

"I know what Foscolo means about Calendaro's *spitting* at Bertram; *that*'s national — the objection, I mean. The Italians and French, with those 'flags of abomination,' their pocket handkerchiefs, spit there, and here, and every where else — in your face almost, and therefore *object* to it on the stage as *too familiar*. But we who *spit* nowhere — but in a man's face when we grow savage — are not likely to feel this. Remember *Massinger*, and Kean's Sir Giles Overreach—

"Lord! *thus* I *spit* at thee and thy counsel!

Besides, Calendaro does *not* spit in Bertram's face, he spits *at* him, as I have seen the Mussulmans do upon the ground when they are in a rage. Again, he *does not* in *fact despise* Bertram, though he affects it — as we all do, when angry with one we think our inferior. He is angry at not being allowed to die in his own way (although not afraid of death); and recollect that he suspected and hated Bertram from the first. Israel Bertuccio, on the other hand, is a cooler and more concentrated fellow: he acts upon *principle* and *impulse*; Calendaro upon *impulse* and *example*.

"So there's argument for you.

"The Doge *repeats*; — *true*, but it is from engrossing passion, and because he sees *different* persons, and is always obliged to recur to the *cause* uppermost in his mind. His speeches are long: — true, but I wrote for the *closet*, and on the French and Italian model rather than yours, which I think not very highly of, for all your *old* dramatists, who are long enough too, God knows: *look* into any of them.

"I return you Foscolo's letter, because it alludes also to his private affairs. I am sorry to see such a man in straits, because I know what they are, or what they were. I never met but three men who would have held out a finger to me: one was yourself, the other William Bankes, and the third a nobleman long ago dead: but of these the first was the only one who offered it while I *really* wanted it; the second from good will — but I was not in need of Bankes's aid, and would not have accepted it if I had (though I love and esteem him); and the *third* ——[1]

"So you see that I have seen some strange things in my time. As for your own offer, it was in 1815, when I was in actual uncertainty of five pounds. I rejected it; but I have not forgotten it, although you probably have.

"P. S. — Foscolo's Ricciardo was lent, with the *leaves uncut*, to some Italians now in villeggiatura, so that I have had no opportunity of hearing their decision, or of reading it. They seized on it as Foscolo's, and on account of the beauty of the paper and printing, directly. If I find it takes, I will reprint it *here*. The Italians think as highly of Foscolo as they can of any man, divided and miserable as they are, and with neither leisure at present to read, nor head nor heart to judge of any thing but extracts from French newspapers and the Lugano Gazette.

"We are all looking at one another, like wolves on their prey in pursuit, only waiting for the first faller on to do unutterable things. They are a great world in chaos, or angels in hell, which you please; but out of chaos came Paradise, and out of hell — I don't know what; but the devil went *in* there, and he was a fine fellow once, you know.

"You need never favour me with any periodical publication, except the Edinburgh Quarterly, and an occasional Blackwood; or now and then a Monthly Review; for the rest I do not feel curiosity enough to look beyond their covers.

"To be sure I took in the British Roberts finely. He fell precisely into the glaring trap laid for him. It was inconceivable how he could be so absurd as to think us serious with him.

"Recollect, that if you put my name to 'Don Juan' in these canting days, any lawyer might oppose my guardian right of my daughter in Chancery, on the plea of its containing the *parody*; — such are the perils of a foolish jest. I was not aware of this at the time, but you will find it correct, I believe; and you may be sure that the Noels would not let it slip. Now I prefer my child to a poem at any time, and so should you, as having half a dozen.

"Let me know your notions.

"If you turn over the earlier pages of the Huntingdon peerage story, you will see how common a name Ada was in the early Plantagenet days. I found it in my own pedigree in the reign of John and Henry, and gave it to my daughter. It was also the name of Charlemagne's sister. It is in an early chapter of Genesis, as the name of the wife of Lamech: and I suppose Ada is the feminine of *Adam*. It is short, ancient, vocalic, and had been in my family; for which reason I gave it to my daughter."

[1] The paragraph is left thus imperfect in the original.

LETTER 391. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 8bre 12°, 1820.

"By land and sea carriage a considerable quantity of books have arrived; and I am obliged and grateful: but 'medio de fonte leporum, surgit amari aliquid,' &c. &c.; which, being interpreted, means,

"I'm thankful for your books, dear Murray;
But why not send Scott's Monastu*rry*?

the only book in four *living* volumes I would give a baioccolo to see — 'bating the rest of the same author, and an occasional Edinburgh and Quarterly, as brief chroniclers of the times. Instead of this, here are Johnny Keats's * * [p—a-bed] poetry, and three novels by God knows whom, except that there is Peg Holford's name to one of them — a spinster whom I thought we had sent back to her spinning. Crayon[1] is very good; Hogg's Tales rough, but RACY, and welcome.

"Books of travels are expensive, and I don't want them, having travelled already; besides, they lie. Thank the author of 'The Profligate, a Comedy,' for his (or her) present. Pray send me *no more* poetry but what is rare and decidedly good. There is such a trash of Keats and the like upon my tables, that I am ashamed to look at them. I say nothing against your parsons, your Smedleys and your Crolys — it is all very fine — but pray dispense me from the pleasure — as also from Mrs. Hemans. Instead of poetry if you will favour me with a few soda-powders, I shall be delighted: but all prose ('bating *travels* and novels NOT by Scott) is welcome, especially Scott's Tales of my Landlord, and so on.

"In the notes to Marino Faliero, it may be as well to say that '*Benintende*' was not really of *the Ten*, but merely *Grand Chancellor*, a separate office (although important): it was an arbitrary alteration of mine. The Doges too were all *buried* in *St. Mark's before* Faliero. It is singular that when his predecessor, Andrea Dandolo, died, *the Ten* made a law that *all* the *future Doges* should be *buried with their families, in their own churches, — one would think by a kind of presentiment.* So that all that is said of his *ancestral Doges*, as buried at St. John's and Paul's, is altered from the fact, *they being in St. Mark's. Make a note* of this, and put *Editor* as the subscription to it.

"As I make such pretensions to accuracy, I should not like to be *twitted* even with such trifles on that score. Of the play they may say what they please, but not so of my costume and *dram. pers.*, they having been real existences.

"I omitted Foscolo in my list of living *Venetian worthies, in the notes*, considering him as an *Italian* in general, and not a mere provincial like the rest; and as an Italian I have spoken of him in the preface to Canto 4th of Childe Harold.

"The French translation of us!!! *oimè! oimè!* — the German; but I don't understand the latter and his long dissertation at the end about the Fausts. Excuse haste. Of politics it is not safe to speak, but nothing is decided as yet.[2]

"I am in a very fierce humour at not having Scott's Monastery. You are *too liberal* in quantity, and somewhat careless of the quality, of your missives. All the *Quarterlies* (four in number) I had had before from you, and *two* of the Edinburghs; but no matter; we shall have new ones by and by. No more Keats, I entreat: — flay him alive; if some of you don't, I must skin him myself. There is no bearing the drivelling idiotism of the manikin.

"I don't feel inclined to care further about 'Don Juan.' What do you think a very pretty Italian lady said to me the other day? She had read it in the French, and paid me some compliments, with due DRAWBACKS, upon it. I answered that what she said was true, but that I suspected it would live longer than Childe Harold. '*Ah but* (said she) *I would rather have the fame of Childe Harold for three years than an* IMMORTALITY *of Don Juan!*' The truth is that *it is* TOO TRUE, and the women hate every thing which strips off the tinsel of *sentiment;* and they are right, as it would rob them of their weapons. I never knew a woman who did not hate *De Grammont's Memoirs* for the same reason: even Lady Oxford used to abuse them.

"Rose's work[3] I never received. It was seized at Venice. Such is the liberality of the Huns, with their two hundred thousand men, that they dare not let such a volume as his circulate."

LETTER 392. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 8bre 16°, 1820.

"The 'Abbot' has just arrived: many thanks; as also for the *Monastery — when you send it!!!*

[1] ["The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent."—(Washington Irving.)]

[2] ["I should recommend your not publishing the prose. It is too late for the Letter to Roberts, and that to Blackwood is too egotistical, and Hobhouse don't like it, except the part about Pope, which is truth, and very good."—*MS.*]

[3] [Mr. William Stewart Rose's "Letters from the North of Italy."]

"The Abbot will have a more than ordinary interest for me, for an ancestor of mine by the mother's side, Sir J. Gordon of Gight, the handsomest of his day, died on a scaffold at Aberdeen for his loyalty to Mary, of whom he was an imputed paramour as well as her relation. His fate was much commented on in the Chronicles of the times. If I mistake not, he had something to do with her escape from Loch Leven, or with her captivity there.[1] But this you will know better than I.

"I recollect Loch Leven as it were but yesterday. I saw it in my way to England in 1798, being then ten years of age. My mother, who was as haughty as Lucifer with her descent from the Stuarts, and her right line, from the *old Gordons, not the Seyton Gordons*, as she disdainfully termed the ducal branch, told me the story, always reminding me how superior *her* Gordons were to the southern Byrons, notwithstanding our Norman, and always masculine descent, which has never lapsed into a female, as my mother's Gordons had done in her own person.

"I have written to you so often lately, that the brevity of this will be welcome.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 393. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 8bre 17°, 1820.

"Enclosed is the Dedication of Marino Faliero to *Goethe*. Query,—is his title *Baron* or not?[2] I think yes. Let me know your opinion, and so forth.

"P. S. — Let me know what Mr. Hobhouse and you have decided about the two *prose* letters and their publication.

"I enclose you an Italian abstract of the German translator of Manfred's Appendix, in which you will perceive quoted what Goethe says of the *whole body* of English poetry (and *not* of me in particular). On this the Dedication is founded, as you will perceive, though I had thought of it before, for I look upon him as a great man."

The very singular Dedication transmitted with this letter has never before been published, nor, as far as I can learn, ever reached the hands of the illustrious German. It is written in the poet's most whimsical and mocking mood; and the unmeasured severity poured out in it upon the two favourite objects of his wrath and ridicule compels me to deprive the reader of some of its most amusing passages.

"DEDICATION TO BARON GOETHE, &c.&c. &c.

"Sir, — In the Appendix to an English work lately translated into German and published at Leipsic, a judgment of yours upon English poetry is quoted as follows: 'That in English poetry, great genius, universal power, a feeling of profundity, with sufficient tenderness and force, are to be found; but that *altogether these do not constitute poets*,' &c. &c.

"I regret to see a great man falling into a great mistake. This opinion of yours only proves that the '*Dictionary of Ten Thousand living English Authors*'[3] has not been translated into German. You will have read, in your friend Schlegel's version, the dialogue in Macbeth —

"'There are *ten thousand!*
Macbeth. *Geese*, villain?
Answer. *Authors*, sir.'

Now, of these 'ten thousand authors,' there are actually nineteen hundred and eighty-seven poets, all alive at this moment, whatever their works may be, as their booksellers well know; and amongst these there are several who possess a far greater reputation than mine, although considerably less than yours. It is owing to this neglect on the part of your German translators that you are not aware of the works of * * *.

"There is also another, named * * * *.

"I mention these poets by way of sample to enlighten you. They form but two bricks of our Babel, (WINDSOR bricks, by the way,) but may serve for a specimen of the building.

"It is, moreover, asserted that 'the predominant character of the whole body of the present English poetry is a *disgust* and *contempt* for life.' But I rather suspect that by one single work of *prose*, *you* yourself, have excited a greater contempt for life than all the English volumes of poesy that ever were written. Madame de Stael says, that 'Werther has occasioned more suicides than the most beautiful woman;' and I really believe that he has put more individuals out of this world than Napoleon himself, except in the way of his profession. Perhaps, Illustrious Sir, the acrimonious judgment passed by a celebrated northern journal[4] upon you in particular, and the Germans in general, has rather indisposed you towards English

[1] [See *post*, Letter 395.]

[2] [Goethe was ennobled, having the *Von* prefixed to his name, but never received the title of Baron.]

[3] [A work entitled "A Biographical Dictionary of Living Authors of Great Britain and Ireland," and dedicated to the Prince Regent, appeared in 1816.]

[4] [See an article on Goethe's "Aus Meinen Leben," &c. in the Edinburgh Rev. vol. xxvi. and xxvii.]

poetry as well as criticism. But you must not regard our critics, who are at bottom good-natured fellows, considering their two professions, — taking up the law in court, and laying it down out of it. No one can more lament their hasty and unfair judgment, in your particular, than I do; and I so expressed myself to your friend Schlegel, in 1816, at Coppet.

"In behalf of my 'ten thousand' living brethren, and of myself, I have thus far taken notice of an opinion expressed with regard to 'English poetry' in general, and which merited notice, because it was YOURS.

"My principal object in addressing you was to testify my sincere respect and admiration of a man, who, for half a century, has led the literature of a great nation, and will go down to posterity as the first literary character of his age.

"You have been fortunate, Sir, not only in the writings which have illustrated your name, but in the name itself, as being sufficiently musical for the articulation of posterity. In this you have the advantage of some of your countrymen, whose names would perhaps be immortal also — if any body could pronounce them.

"It may, perhaps, be supposed, by this apparent tone of levity, that I am wanting in intentional respect towards you; but this will be a mistake: I am always flippant in prose. Considering you, as I really and warmly do, in common with all your own, and with most other nations, to be by far the first literary character which has existed in Europe since the death of Voltaire, I felt, and feel, desirous to inscribe to you the following work, — *not* as being either a tragedy or a *poem*, (for I cannot pronounce upon its pretensions to be either one or the other, or both, or neither,) but as a mark of esteem and admiration from a foreigner to the man who has been hailed in Germany 'THE GREAT GOETHE.'

"I have the honour to be,
"With the truest respect,
"Your most obedient and
"Very humble servant,
"BYRON.

"Ravenna, 8bre 14°, 1820.

"P. S. — I perceive that in Germany, as well as in Italy, there is a great struggle about what they call '*Classical*' and '*Romantic*,' — terms which were not subjects of classification in England, at least when I left it four or five years ago. Some of the English scribblers, it is true, abused Pope and Swift, but the reason was that they themselves did not know how to write either prose or verse; but nobody thought them worth making a sect of. Perhaps there may be something of the kind sprung up lately, but I have not heard much about it, and it would be such bad taste that I shall be very sorry to believe it."

CHAPTER XL.

1820.

RAVENNA.—LETTERS TO MURRAY AND MOORE. — A CHANT. — EPIGRAMS. — A PORTRAIT. — HENRY MATTHEWS. — THE WHITE LADY OF COLALTO. — KEATS AND THE EDINBURGH REVIEW. — PROGRESS OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY. — ANECDOTES. — PLAN OF A NEWSPAPER IN CONJUNCTION WITH MOORE. — DISTURBED STATE OF ITALY.—THE CARBONARI.—LORD BYRON'S ADDRESS TO THE NEAPOLITAN GOVERNMENT. — FURTHER ANECDOTES.

LETTER 394. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, October 17. 1820.

"YOU owe me two letters — pay them. I want to know what you are about. The summer is over, and you will be back to Paris. Apropos of Paris, it was not Sophia *Gail*, but Sophia *Gay* — the English word *Gay* — who was my correspondent.[1] Can you tell who *she* is, as you did of the defunct * * ?

"Have you gone on with your poem? I have received the French of mine. Only think of being *traduced* into a foreign language in such an abominable travesty! It is useless to rail, but one can't help it.

"Have you got my Memoir copied? I have begun a continuation. Shall I send it you, as far as it is gone?

"I can't say any thing to you about Italy, for the Government here look upon me with a suspicious eye, as I am well informed. Pretty fellows! — as if I, a solitary stranger, could do any mischief. It is because I am fond of rifle and pistol shooting, I believe; for they took the alarm at the quantity of cartridges I consumed, — the wiseacres!

[1] [I had mistaken the name of the lady he inquired after, and reported her to him as dead. But, on the receipt of the above letter, I discovered that his correspondent was Madame Sophie Gay, mother of the celebrated poetess and beauty, Mademoiselle Delphine Gay.]

"You don't deserve a long letter — nor a letter at all — for your silence. You have got a new Bourbon [1], it seems, whom they have christened 'Dieu-donné;' — perhaps the honour of the present may be disputed. Did you write the good lines on ——, the Laker?

"The Queen has made a pretty theme for the journals. Was there ever such evidence published? Why it is worse than 'Little's Poems' or 'Don Juan.' If you don't write soon, I will 'make you a speech.'

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 395. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 8bre 25°, 1820.

"Pray forward the enclosed to Lady Byron. It is on business.

"In thanking you for the Abbot, I made four grand mistakes. Sir John Gordon was not of Gight, but of Bogagicht, and a son of Huntley's. He suffered *not* for his loyalty, but in an insurrection. He had *nothing* to do with Loch Leven, having been dead some time at the period of the Queen's confinement: and, fourthly, I am not sure that he was the Queen's paramour or no, for Robertson does not allude to this, though *Walter Scott does*, in the list he gives of her admirers (as unfortunate) at the close of 'The Abbot.'

"I must have made all these mistakes in recollecting my mother's account of the matter, although she was more accurate than I am, being precise upon points of genealogy, like all the aristocratical Scotch. She had a long list of ancestors, like Sir Lucius O'Trigger's, most of whom are to be found in the old Scotch Chronicles, Spalding, &c. in arms and doing mischief. I remember well passing Loch Leven, as well as the Queen's Ferry: we were on our way to England in 1798. Yours.

"You had better not publish Blackwood and the Roberts' prose, except what regards Pope; — you have let the time slip by."

The Pamphlet in answer to Blackwood's Magazine, here mentioned, was occasioned by an article in that work, entitled "Remarks on Don Juan," and though put to press by Mr. Murray, was never published. The writer in the Magazine having, in reference to certain passages in Don Juan, taken occasion to pass some severe strictures on the author's matrimonial conduct, Lord Byron, in his reply, enters at some length into that painful subject; and his defence, [2] — if defence it can be called, where there has never yet been any definite charge [3] — will be perused with strong interest.

LETTER 396. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 9bre 4. 1820.

"I have received from Mr. Galignani the enclosed letters, duplicates and receipts, which will explain themselves. [4] As the poems are your property by purchase, right, and justice, *all matters of publication*, &c. &c. *are for you to decide upon*. I know not how far my compliance with Mr. Galignani's request might be legal, and I doubt that it would not be honest. In case you choose to arrange with him, I enclose the permits to you, and in so doing I wash my hands of the business altogether. I sign them merely to enable you to exert the power you justly possess more properly. I will have nothing to do with it farther, except, in my answer to Mr. Galignani, to state that the letters, &c. &c. are sent to you, and the causes thereof.

"If you can check these foreign pirates, do; if not, put the permissive papers in the fire. I can have no view nor object whatever, but to secure to you your property.

"Yours, &c.

"P.S. — I have read part of the Quarterly just arrived: Mr. Bowles shall be answered; — he is not *quite* correct in his statement about English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. [5] They support Pope, I see, in the

[1] [The Duke of Bourdeaux, born the 29th of September 1820.]

[2] [It has since been introduced into the complete edition of Lord Byron's Works (see p. 800.), and is characterised by the Quarterly Reviewers as "one of the finest specimens of English prose produced in this or in any preceding time."]

[3] While these sheets are passing through the press, a printed statement has been transmitted to me by Lady Noel Byron, which the reader will find inserted in the Appendix (First Edit.)

[4] Mr. Galignani had applied to Lord Byron with the view of procuring from him such legal right over those works of his Lordship of which he had hitherto been the sole publisher in France, as would enable him to prevent others, in future, from usurping the same privilege.

[5] [In a pamphlet entitled "The Invariable Principles of Poetry," in a letter to Mr. Campbell, occasioned by his masterly vindication of Pope in the first volume of his Specimens of British Poets. — "It is with pain we have so long witnessed the attacks on the moral and poetical character of this great poet by the last two of his editors. Warton, who first entered the list, though not unwilling to wound, exhibits occasionally some of the courtesy of the ancient chivalry; but his successor, the Rev. Mr. Bowles, possesses the contest à *l'outrance*, with the appearance, though not with the reality, of personal hostility. It had been more honourable in this gentleman, with his known prejudices against this class of poetry, in which Pope will always remain unrivalled, to have declined the office of editor, than to attempt to spread among new generations of readers the most unfavourable and the most unjust impressions of the Poet and of the Man."—*Quart. Rev.* vol. xxiii. p. 407.]

Quarterly; let them continue to do so: it is a sin, and a shame, and a *damnation* to think that *Pope ! !* should require it — but he does. Those miserable mountebanks of the day, the poets, disgrace themselves and deny God in running down Pope, the most *faultless* of poets, and almost of men."

LETTER 397. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, November 5. 1820.

"Thanks for your letter, which hath come somewhat costively; but better late than never. Of it anon. Mr. Galignani, of the Press, hath, it seems, been sup-planted and sub-pirated by another Parisian publisher, who has audaciously printed an edition of L. B.'s works, at the ultra-liberal price of ten francs and (as Galignani piteously observes) eight francs only for booksellers! 'horresco referens.' Think of a man's *whole* works producing so little!

"Galignani sends me, post haste, a permission *for him, from me*, to publish, &c. &c. which *permit* I have signed and sent to Mr. Murray of Albemarle Street. Will you explain to G. *that I* have no right to dispose of Murray's works without his leave? and therefore I must refer him to M. to get the permit out of his claws — no easy matter, I suspect. I have written to G. to say as much; but a word of mouth from a 'great brother author' would convince him that I could not honestly have complied with his wish, though I might legally. What I could do I have done, viz. signed the warrant and sent it to Murray. Let the dogs divide the carcass, if it is killed to their liking.

"I am glad of your epigram. It is odd that we should both let our wits run away with our sentiments; for I am sure that we are both Queen's men at bottom. But there is no resisting a clinch — it is so clever! Apropos of that—we have a 'diphthong' also in this part of the world — not a *Greek*, but a *Spanish* one — do you understand me? — which is about to blow up the whole alphabet. It was first pronounced at Naples, and is spreading; but we are nearer the barbarians, who are in great force on the Po, and will pass it, with the first legitimate pretext.

"There will be the devil to pay, and there is no saying who will or who will not be set down in his bill. If 'honour should come unlooked for' to any of your acquaintance, make a Melody of it, that his ghost, like poor Yorick's, may have the satisfaction of being plaintively pitied — or still more nobly commemorated, like 'Oh breathe not his name.' In case you should not think him worth it, here is a Chant for you instead —

"When a man hath no freedom to fight for at home,
Let him combat for that of his neighbours;
Let him think of the glories of Greece and of Rome,
And get knock'd on the head for his labours.

"To do good to mankind is the chivalrous plan,
And is always as nobly requited;
Then battle for freedom wherever you can,
And, if not shot or hang'd, you'll get knighted.

"So you have gotten the letter of 'Epigrams' — I am glad of it. You will not be so, for I shall send you more. Here is one I wrote for the endorsement of 'the Deed of Separation' in 1816; but the lawyers objected to it, as superfluous. It was written as we were getting up the signing and sealing. * * has the original.

"*Endorsement to the Deed of Separation, in the April of* 1816.

"A year ago you swore, fond she!
'To love, to honour,' and so forth:
Such was the vow you pledged to me,
And here's exactly what 'tis worth.

"For the anniversary of January 2. 1821, I have a small grateful anticipation, which, in case of accident, I add —

"*To Penelope, January* 2. 1821.

"This day, of all our days, has done
The worst for me and you: —
'Tis just *six* years since we were *one*,
And *five* since we were *two*.

"Pray excuse all this nonsense; for I must talk nonsense just now, for fear of wandering to more serious topics, which, in the present state of things, is not safe by a foreign post.

"I told you in my last, that I had been going on with the 'Memoirs,' and have got as far as twelve more sheets. But I suspect they will be interrupted. In that case I will send them on by post, though I feel remorse at making a friend pay so much for postage, for we can't frank here beyond the frontier.

"I shall be glad to hear of the event of the Queen's concern. As to the ultimate effect, the most inevitable one to you and me (if they and we live so long) will be that the Miss Moores and Miss Byrons will present us with a great variety of grandchildren by different fathers.

"Pray, where did you get hold of Goethe's Florentine husband-killing story? Upon such matters, in general, I may say, with Beau Clincher, in reply to Errand's wife —

"'Oh the villain, he hath murdered my poor Timothy!

"'*Clincher.* Damn your Timothy! — I tell you, woman, your husband has *murdered me* — he has carried away my fine jubilee clothes.'[1]

"So Bowles has been telling a story, too ('t is in the Quarterly), about the woods of 'Madeira,' and so forth. I shall be at Bowles again, if he is not quiet. He mis-states, or mistakes, in a point or two. The paper is finished, and so is the letter.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 398. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 9bre 9°, 1820.

"The talent you approve of is an amiable one, and might prove a 'national service,' but unfortunately I must be angry with a man before I draw his real portrait; and I can't deal in '*generals*,' so that I trust never to have provocation enough to make a *Gallery*. If '*the* person' had not by many little dirty sneaking traits provoked it, I should have been silent, though I *had observed* him. Here follows an alteration: put —

> "Devil with *such* delight in damning,
> That if at the resurrection
> Unto him the free election
> Of his future could be given,
> 'Twould be rather Hell than Heaven;

that is to say, if these two new lines do not too much lengthen out and weaken the amiability of the original thought and expression. You have a discretionary power about showing. I should think that Croker would not disrelish a sight of these light little humorous things, and may be indulged now and then.

"Why, I do like one or two vices, to be sure; but I can back a horse and fire a pistol 'without thinking or blinking' like Major Sturgeon; I have fed at times for two months together on sheer biscuit and water (without metaphor); I can get over seventy or eighty miles a day *riding* post, and *swim five* at a stretch, as at Venice, in 1818, or at least I *could do*, and have done it ONCE.

"I know Henry Matthews[2]: he is the image, to the very voice, of his brother Charles, only darker — his laugh his in particular. The first time I ever met him was in Scrope Davies's rooms after his brother's death, and I nearly dropped, thinking that it was his ghost. I have also dined with him in his rooms at King's College. Hobhouse once purposed a similar Memoir; but I am afraid that the letters of Charles's correspondence with me (which are at Whitton with my other papers) would hardly do for the public: for our lives were not over strict, and our letters somewhat lax upon most subjects.[3]

"Last week I sent you a correspondence with Galignani, and some documents on your property. You have now, I think, an opportunity of *checking*, or at least *limiting*, those *French republications*. You may let all your authors publish what they please *against me* and *mine*. A publisher is not, and cannot be, responsible for all the works that issue from his printer's.

"'The 'White Lady of Avenel' is not quite so good as a *real well authenticated* ('Donna Bianca') White Lady of Colalto, or spectre in the Marca Trivigiana, who has been repeatedly seen. There is a man (a huntsman) now alive who saw her also. Hoppner could tell you all about her, and so can Rose perhaps. I myself have *no doubt* of the fact, historical and spectral.[4] She always appeared on particular occasions, before the deaths of the family, &c. &c. I heard Madame Benzoni say, that she knew a gentleman who had seen her cross his room at Colalto Castle. Hoppner saw and spoke with the huntsman who met her at the chase, and never *hunted* afterwards. She was a girl attendant, who, one day dressing the hair of a Countess Colalto, was seen by her mistress to smile upon her husband in the glass. The Countess had her shut up in the wall of the castle, like Constance de Beverley. Ever after, she haunted them and all the Colaltos. She is described as very beautiful and fair. It is well authenticated."

LETTER 399. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 9bre 18°, 1820.

"The death of Waite[5] is a shock to the — teeth, as well as to the feelings of all who

[1] [See Farquhar's "Constant Couple, or a Trip to the Jubilee," act iv. sc. 1.]

[2] [Henry Matthews was educated at Eton, and afterwards became a fellow of King's College, Cambridge. In 1817 he left England on account of ill health, and on his return in 1819 published his well-known "Diary of an Invalid." In 1821 he was appointed Advocate Fiscal of Ceylon, and in 1827 was promoted to the Bench of the Supreme Court of Judicature in that island; where he died, May 20. 1828, in his thirty-eighth year.]

[3] Here follow some details respecting his friend Charles Skinner Matthews, which have already been given in this work. [See *antè*, p. 60.]

[4] The ghost-story, in which he here professes such serious belief, forms the subject of one of Mr. Rogers's beautiful Italian sketches. See "*Italy*," p. 43. edit. 1830.

[5] ['The fashionable dentist of Old Burlington Street. "Went," says Lord Byron, "to Waite's. Teeth all right and white; but he says that I grind them in my sleep, and chip the edges." — *Journal*, 1814.]

knew him. Good God, he and *Blake*[1] both gone! I left them both in the most robust health, and little thought of the national loss in so short a time as five years. They were both as much superior to Wellington in rational greatness, as he who preserves the hair and the teeth is preferable to the 'bloody blustering warrior' who gains a name by breaking heads and knocking out grinders. Who succeeds him? Where is tooth-powder *mild* and yet efficacious — where is *tincture* — where are clearing *roots* and *brushes* now to be obtained? Pray obtain what information you can upon these '*Tusc*ulan questions.' My jaws ache to think on't. Poor fellows! I anticipated seeing both again; and yet they are gone to that place where both teeth and hair last longer than they do in this life. I have seen a thousand graves opened, and always perceived, that whatever was gone, the *teeth* and *hair* remained with those who had died with them. Is not this odd? They go the very first things in *youth*, and yet last the longest in the dust, if people will but *die* to preserve them! It is a queer life, and a queer death, that of mortals.

"I knew that Waite had married, but little thought that the other decease was so soon to overtake him. Then he was such a delight, such a coxcomb, such a jewel of a man! There is a tailor at Bologna so like him! and also at the top of his profession. Do not neglect this commission. *Who* or *what* can replace him? What says the public?

"I remand you the Preface. *Don't forget* that the Italian extract from the Chronicle must *be translated*. With regard to what you say of retouching the Juans and the Hints, it is all very well; but I can't *furbish*. I am like the tiger (in poesy), if I miss the first spring, I go growling back to my jungle. There is no second; I can't correct; I can't, and I won't. Nobody ever succeeds in it, great or small. Tasso remade the whole of his Jerusalem; but who ever reads that version? all the world goes to the first. Pope *added* to 'The Rape of the Lock,' but did not reduce it. You must take my things as they happen to be. If they are not likely to suit, reduce their *estimate* accordingly. I would rather give them away than hack and hew them. I don't say that you are not right: I merely repeat that I cannot better them. I must 'either make a spoon, or spoil a horn;' and there's an end.

"Yours.

"P. S. — Of the praises of that little *** Keats[2], I shall observe as Johnson did when Sheridan the actor got a *pension*: 'What! has *he* got a pension? Then it is time that I should give up *mine!*'[3] Nobody could be prouder of the praise of the Edinburgh than I was, or more alive to their censure, as I showed in English Bards and Scotch Reviewers. At present *all the men* they have ever praised are degraded by that insane article. Why don't they review and praise 'Solomon's Guide to Health?' it is better sense and as much poetry as Johnny Keats.

"Bowles must be *bowled* down. 'Tis a sad match at cricket, if he can get any notches at Pope's expense. If he once get into '*Lord*'s ground,' (to continue the pun, because it is foolish,) I think I could beat him in one innings. You did not know, perhaps, that I was once (*not metaphorically*, but *really*) a good cricketer, particularly in *batting*, and I played in the Harrow match against the Etonians in 1805, gaining more notches (as one of our chosen eleven) than any, except Lord Ipswich and Brookman, on our side."

LETTER 400. TO MR. MURRAY.

"Ravenna, 9bre 23°, 1820.

"The 'Hints,' Hobhouse says, will require a good deal of slashing to suit the times, which will be a work of time, for I don't feel at all laborious just now. Whatever effect they are to have would perhaps be greater in a separate form, and they also must have my name to them. Now, if you publish them in the same volume with Don Juan, they identify Don Juan as mine, which I don't think worth a Chancery suit about my daughter's guardianship, as in your present code a facetious poem is sufficient to take away a man's rights over his family.

"Of the state of things here it would be difficult and not very prudent to speak at large, the Huns opening all letters. I wonder if they can read them when they have opened them; if so, they may see, in my

[1] ["Write but like Wordsworth, live beside a Lake,
And keep your bushy locks a year from Blake.

"As famous a tonsor as Licinus himself, and better paid, and may, like him, be one day a senator, having a better qualification than one half of the heads he crops, viz. — independence." — *Hints from Horace*. See *Works*, p. 446.]

[2] [The epithet omitted here is "*dirty blackguard*."]

[3] ["Johnson, who thought slightingly of Sheridan's art, upon hearing that he was also pensioned, exclaimed, 'What! have they given *him* a pension? Then it is time for me to give up mine!' Whether this proceeded from a momentary indignation, as if it were an affront to his exalted merit that a player should be rewarded in the same manner with him, or was the sudden effect of a fit of peevishness, it was unluckily said, and, indeed, cannot be justified."—*Boswell's Johnson*, vol. ii. p. 157. ed. 1835.]

MOST LEGIBLE HAND, THAT I THINK THEM DAMNED SCOUNDRELS AND BARBARIANS, and THEIR EMPEROR a FOOL, and themselves more fools than he; all which they may send to Vienna for any thing I care. They have got themselves masters of the Papal police, and are bullying away; but some day or other they will pay for all: it may not be very soon, because these unhappy Italians have no consistency among themselves; but I suppose that Providence will get tired of them at last, * *

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 401. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, Dec. 9. 1820.

"Besides this letter, you will receive *three* packets, containing, in all, 18 more sheets of Memoranda, which, I fear, will cost you more in postage than they will ever produce by being printed in the next century. Instead of waiting so long, if you could make any thing of them *now* in the way of *reversion*, (that is, after *my* death,) I should be very glad, — as, with all due regard to your progeny, I prefer you to your grandchildren. Would not Longman or Murray advance you a certain sum *now*, pledging themselves *not* to have them published till after *my* decease, think you? — and what say you?

"Over these latter sheets I would leave you a discretionary power [1]; because they contain, perhaps, a thing or two which is too sincere for the public. If I consent to your disposing of their reversion *now*, where would be the harm? Tastes may change. I would, in your case, make my essay to dispose of them, *not* publish, now; and if *you* (as is most likely) survive me, add what you please from your own knowledge; and, *above all*, *contradict* any thing, if I have *mis*-stated; for my first object is the truth, even at my own expense.

"I have some knowledge of your countryman Muley Moloch [2], the lecturer. He wrote to me several letters upon Christianity, to convert me: and, if I had not been a Christian already, I should probably have been now, in consequence. I thought there was something of wild talent in him, mixed with a due leaven of absurdity, — as there must be in all talent, let loose upon the world, without a martingale.

"The ministers seem still to persecute the Queen * * *; but they *won't* go out, the sons of b—es. Damn Reform — I want a place — what say you? You must applaud the honesty of the declaration, whatever you may think of the intention.

"I have quantities of paper in England, original and translated — tragedy, &c. &c. and am now copying out a fifth canto of Don Juan, 149 stanzas. So that there will be near *three thin* Albemarle, or *two thick* volumes of all sorts of my Muses. I mean to plunge thick, too, into the contest upon Pope, and to lay about me like a dragon till I make manure of Bowles for the top of Parnassus.

"These rogues are right — *we do* laugh at *t'others* — eh? — don't we? [3] You shall see — you shall see what things I'll say, an' it pleases Providence to leave us leisure. But in these parts they are all going to war; and there is to be liberty, and a row, and a constitution — when they can get them. But I won't talk politics — it is low. Let us talk of the Queen, and her bath, and her bottle — that's the only *motley* nowadays.

"If there are any acquaintances of mine, salute them. The priests here are trying to persecute me, — but no matter.

"Yours, &c."

LETTER 402. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, Dec. 9, 1820.

"I open my letter to tell you a fact [1], which will show the state of this country better than I can. The commandant of the troops is *now* lying *dead* in my house. He was shot at a little past eight o'clock, about two hundred paces from my door. I was putting on my great-coat to visit Madame la Contessa G. when I heard the shot. On coming into the hall, I found all my servants on the balcony, exclaiming that a man was murdered. I immediately ran down, calling on Tita (the bravest of them) to follow me. The rest wanted to hinder us from going,

[1] The power here meant is that of omitting passages that might be thought objectionable. He afterwards gave me this, as well as every other right, over the whole of the manuscript.

[2] [See *antè*, p. 438.]

[3] He here alludes to a humorous article, of which I had told him, in Blackwood's Magazine, where the poets of the day were all grouped together in a variety of fantastic shapes, with "Lord Byron and little Moore laughing behind, as if they would split," at the rest of the fraternity.

[4] ["The other evening ('twas on Friday last) —
This is a fact, and no poetic fable —
Just as my great coat was about me cast,
My hat and gloves still lying on the table,
I heard a shot — 'twas eight o'clock scarce past —
And running out as fast as I was able,
I found the military commandant
Stretch'd in the street, and able scarce to pant."
Don Juan, c. v. st. 33.]

as it is the custom for every body here, it seems, to run away from 'the stricken deer.'

"However, down we ran, and found him lying on his back, almost, if not quite, dead, with five wounds; one in the heart, two in the stomach, one in the finger, and the other in the arm. Some soldiers cocked their guns, and wanted to hinder me from passing. However, we passed, and I found Diego, the adjutant, crying over him like a child — a surgeon, who said nothing of his profession — a priest, sobbing a frightened prayer — and the commandant, all this time, on his back, on the hard, cold pavement, without light or assistance, or any thing around him but confusion and dismay.

"As nobody could, or would, do any thing but howl and pray, and as no one would stir a finger to move him, for fear of consequences, I lost my patience — made my servant and a couple of the mob take up the body — sent off two soldiers to the guard — despatched Diego to the Cardinal with the news, and had the commandant carried up stairs into my own quarter.[1] But it was too late, he was gone — not at all disfigured — bled inwardly — not above an ounce or two came out.

"I had him partly stripped — made the surgeon examine him, and examined him myself. He had been shot by cut balls, or slugs. I felt one of the slugs, which had gone through him, all but the skin. Everybody conjectures why he was killed, but no one knows how. The gun was found close by him — an old gun, half filed down.

"He only said, 'O Dio!' and 'Gesu!' two or three times, and appeared to have suffered very little. Poor fellow! he was a brave officer, but had made himself much disliked by the people. I knew him personally, and had met with him often at conversazioni and elsewhere. My house is full of soldiers, dragoons, doctors, priests, and all kinds of persons, — though I have now cleared it, and clapt sentinels at the doors. To-morrow the body is to be moved. The town is in the greatest confusion, as you may suppose.

"You are to know that, if I had not had the body moved, they would have left him there till morning in the street, for fear of consequences. I would not choose to let even a dog die in such a manner, without succour: — and, as for consequences, I care for none in a duty.

"Yours, &c.

"P. S. — The lieutenant on duty by the body is smoking his pipe with great composure. — A queer people this."

LETTER 403. TO MR. MOORE.

"Ravenna, Dec. 25. 1820.

"You will or ought to have received the packet and letters which I remitted to your address a fortnight ago (or it may be more days), and I shall be glad of an answer, as, in these times and places, packets per post are in some risk of not reaching their destination.

"I have been thinking of a project for you and me, in case we both get to London again, which (if a Neapolitan war don't suscitate) may be calculated as possible for one of us about the spring of 1821. I presume that you, too, will be back by that time, or never; but on that you will give me some index. The project, then, is for you and me to set up jointly a *newspaper* — nothing more nor less — weekly, or so, with some improvement or modifications upon the plan of the present scoundrels, who degrade that department, — but a *newspaper*, which we will edite in due form, and, nevertheless, with some attention.

"There must always be in it a piece of poesy from one or other of us *two*, leaving room, however, for such dilettanti rhymers as may be deemed worthy of appearing in the same column: but *this* must be a *sine qua non*; and also as much prose as we can compass. We will take an *office* — our names *not* announced, but suspected — and, by the blessing of Providence, give the age some new lights upon policy, poesy, biography, criticism, morality, theology, and all other *ism*, *ality*, and *ology* whatsoever.

"Why, man, if we were to take to this in good earnest, your debts would be paid off in a twelvemonth, and, by dint of a little diligence and practice, I doubt not that we could distance the common-place blackguards who have so long disgraced common sense and the common reader. They have no merit but practice and impudence, both of which we may acquire; and, as for talent and culture, the devil's in't if such proofs as we have given of both can't furnish out something better than the 'funeral baked meats' which have coldly set forth the breakfast table of all Great Britain for so many years. Now, what think you? Let me know; and recollect that, if we take to such an enterprise, we must do so in good earnest. Here

[1] ["Poor fellow! for some reason surely bad
They had slain him with five slugs, and left him there
To perish on the pavement: so I had
Him borne into the house, and up the stair,
And stripp'd and look'd to," &c.
Don Juan, c. v. st. 34.]

is a hint, — do you make it a plan. We will modify it into as literary and classical a concern as you please, only let us put out our powers upon it, and it will most likely succeed. But you must *live* in London, and I also, to bring it to bear, and *we must keep it a secret.*

"As for the living in London, I would make that not difficult to you (if you would allow me), until we could see whether one means or other (the success of the plan, for instance) would not make it quite easy for you, as well as your family; and, in any case, we should have some fun, composing, correcting, supposing, inspecting, and supping together over our lucubrations. If you think this worth a thought, let me know, and I will begin to lay in a small literary capital of composition for the occasion.

"Yours ever affectionately,

"B.

"P. S. — If you thought of a middle plan between a *Spectator* and a newspaper, why not? — only not on a *Sunday*. Not that Sunday is not an excellent day, but it is engaged already. We will call it the 'Tenda Rossa,' the name Tassoni gave an answer of his in a controversy, in allusion to the delicate hint of Timour the Lame, to his enemies, by a 'Tenda' of that colour, before he gave battle. Or we will call it 'Gli,' or 'I Carbonari,' if it so please you — or any other name full of 'pastime and prodigality,' which you may prefer. Let me have an answer. I conclude poetically, with the bellman, 'A merry Christmas to you!'"

The year 1820 was an era signalised, as will be remembered, by the many efforts of the revolutionary spirit which, at that time, broke forth, like ill-suppressed fire, throughout the greater part of the South of Europe. In Italy, Naples had already raised the Constitutional standard, and her example was fast operating through the whole of that country. Throughout Romagna, secret societies, under the name of Carbonari, had been organised, which waited but the word of their chiefs to break out into open insurrection. We have seen from Lord Byron's Journal in 1814, what intense interest he took in the last struggles of Revolutionary France under Napoleon; and his exclamations, "Oh for a Republic! — 'Brutus, thou sleepest!'" show the lengths to which, in theory at least, his political zeal extended. Since then, he had but rarely turned his thoughts to politics; the tame, ordinary vicissitude of public affairs having but little in it to stimulate a mind like his, whose sympathies nothing short of a crisis seemed worthy to interest. This the present state of Italy gave every promise of affording him; and, in addition to the great national cause itself, in which there was every thing that a lover of liberty, warm from the pages of Petrarch and Dante, could desire, he had also private ties and regards to enlist him socially in the contest. The brother of Madame Guiccioli, Count Pietro Gamba, who had been passing some time at Rome and Naples, was now returned from his tour; and the friendly sentiments with which, notwithstanding a natural bias previously in the contrary direction, he at length learned to regard the noble lover of his sister, cannot better be described than in the words of his fair relative herself.

"At this time," says Madame Guiccioli, "my beloved brother, Pietro, returned to Ravenna from Rome and Naples. He had been prejudiced by some enemies of Lord Byron against his character, and my intimacy with him afflicted him greatly; nor had my letters succeeded in entirely destroying the evil impression which Lord Byron's detractors had produced. No sooner, however, had he seen and known him, than he became inspired with an interest in his favour, such as could not have been produced by mere exterior qualities, but was the result only of that union he saw in him of all that is most great and beautiful, as well in the heart as mind of man. From that moment every former prejudice vanished, and the conformity of their opinions and studies contributed to unite them in a friendship, which only ended with their lives." [1]

The young Gamba, who was, at this time, but twenty years of age, with a heart full of all those dreams of the regeneration of Italy, which not only the example of Naples, but the spirit working beneath the surface all around him, inspired, had, together with his father, who was still in the prime of life, become enrolled in the secret bands now organising throughout Romagna, and Lord Byron

[1] "In quest' epoca venne a Ravenna di ritorno da Roma e Napoli il mio diletto fratello Pietro. Egli era stato prevenuto da dei nemeci di Lord Byron contro il di lui carattere; molto lo affligeva la mia intimità con lui, e le mie lettere non avevano riuscito a bene distruggere la cattiva impressione ricevuta dei detrattori di Lord Byron. Ma appena lo vidde e lo conobbe egli pure ricevesse quella impressione che non può essere prodotta da dei pregi esteriori, ma solamente dall' unione di tuttociò che vi è di più bello e di più grande nel cuore e nella mente dell' uomo. Svani ogni sua anteriore prevenzione contro di Lord Byron, e la conformità della loro idee e dei studii loro contribuì a stringerli in quella amicizia che non doveva avere fine che colla loro vita."

was, by their intervention, admitted also among the brotherhood. The following heroic Address to the Neapolitan Government (written by the noble poet in Italian [1], and forwarded, it is thought, by himself to Naples, but intercepted on the way,) will show how deep, how earnest, and expansive was his zeal in that great, general cause of Political Freedom, for which he soon after laid down his life among the marshes of Missolonghi.

"An Englishman, a friend to liberty, having understood that the Neapolitans permit even foreigners to contribute to the good cause, is desirous that they should do him the honour of accepting a thousand louis, which he takes the liberty of offering. Having already, not long since been an ocular witness of the despotism of the Barbarians in the States occupied by them in Italy, he sees, with the enthusiasm natural to a cultivated man, the generous determination of the Neapolitans to assert their well-won independence. As a member of the English House of Peers, he would be a traitor to the principles which placed the reigning family of England on the throne, if he were not grateful for the noble lesson so lately given both to people and to kings. The offer which he desires to make is small in itself, as must always be that presented from an individual to a nation; but he trusts that it will not be the last they will receive from his countrymen. His distance from the frontier, and the feeling of his personal incapacity to contribute efficaciously to the service of the nation, prevents him from proposing himself as worthy of the lowest commission, for which experience and talent might be requisite. But if, as a mere volunteer, his presence were not a burden to whomsoever he might serve under, he would repair to whatever place the Neapolitan Government might point out, there to obey the orders and participate in the dangers of his commanding officer, without any other motive than that of sharing the destiny of a brave nation, defending itself against the self-called Holy Alliance, which but combines the vice of hypocrisy with despotism." [2]

It was during the agitation of this crisis, while surrounded by rumours and alarms, and expecting, every moment, to be summoned into the field, that Lord Byron commenced the Journal which I am now about to give; and which it is impossible to peruse, with the recollection of his former Diary of 1814 in our minds, without reflecting how wholly different, in all the circumstances connected with them, were the two periods at which these records of his passing thoughts were traced. The first he wrote at a time which may be considered, to use his own words, as "the most poetical part of his whole life,"—*not*, certainly, in what regarded the powers of his genius, to which every succeeding year added new force and range, but in all that may be said to constitute the poetry of character,—those fresh, unworldly feelings of which, in spite of his early plunge into experience, he still retained the gloss, and that ennobling light of imagination, which, with all his professed scorn of mankind, still followed in the track of his affections, giving a lustre to every object on which they rested. There was, indeed, in his misanthropy, as in his sorrows, at that period, to the full as much of fancy as of reality; and even those gallantries and loves in which he at the same time entangled himself partook equally, as I have endeavoured to show, of the same imaginative character. Though brought early under the dominion of the senses, he had been also early rescued from this thraldom by, in the first place, the satiety such excesses never fail to produce, and, at no long interval after, by this series of half-fanciful attachments which, though in their moral consequences to society, perhaps, still more mischievous, had the varnish at

[1] A draft of this Address, in his own handwriting, was found among his papers. He is supposed to have intrusted it to a professed agent of the Constitutional Government of Naples, who had waited upon him secretly at Ravenna, and, under the pretence of having been waylaid and robbed, induced his Lordship to supply him with money for his return. This man turned out afterwards to have been a spy; and the above paper, if confided to him, fell most probably into the hands of the Pontifical Government.

[2] "Un Inglese amico della libertà avendo sentito che i Napolitani permettono anche agli stranieri di contribuire alla buona causa, bramerebbe l'onore di vedere accettata la sua offerta di mille luigi, la quale egli azzarda di fare. Già testimonio oculare non molto fa della tirannia dei Barbari negli stati da loro occupati nell' Italia, egli vede con tutto l'entusiasmo di un uomo ben nato la generosa determinazione dei Napolitani per confermare la loro bene acquistata indipendenza. Membro della Camera dei Pari della nazione Inglese egli sarebbe un traditore ai principii che hanno posto sul trono la famiglia regnante d'Inghilterra se non riconoscesse la bella lezione di bel nuovo data ai popoli ed ai Re. L' offerta che egli brama di presentare è poca in se stessa, come bisogna che sia sempre quella di un individuo ad una nazione, ma egli spera che non sarà l'ultima dalla parte dei suoi compatriotti. La sua lontananza dalle frontiere, e il sentimento della sua poca capacità personale di contribuire efficacimente a servire la nazione gl' impedisce di proporsi come degno della più piccola commissione che domanda dell' esperienza e del talento. Ma, se come semplice volontario la sua presenza non fosse un incomodo a quello che l'accetasse egli riparebbe a qualunque luogo indicato dal Governo Napolitano, per ubbidire agli ordini e participare ai pericoli del suo superiore, senza avere altri motivi che quello di dividere il destino di una brava nazione resistendo alla se dicente Santa Allianza la quale aggiunge l'ippocrisia al despotismo."

least of refinement on the surface, and by the novelty and apparent difficulty that invested them served to keep alive that illusion of imagination from which such pursuits derive their sole redeeming charm.

With such a mixture, or rather predominance, of the ideal in his loves, his hates, and his sorrows, the state of his existence at that period, animated as it was, and kept buoyant, by such a flow of success, must be acknowledged, even with every deduction for the unpicturesque associations of a London life, to have been, in a high degree, poetical, and to have worn round it altogether a sort of halo of romance, which the events that followed were but too much calculated to dissipate. By his marriage, and its results, he was again brought back to some of those bitter realities of which his youth had had a foretaste. Pecuniary embarrassment — that ordeal, of all others, the most trying to delicacy and high-mindedness — now beset him with all the indignities that usually follow in its train; and he was thus rudely schooled into the advantages of *possessing* money, when he had hitherto thought but of the generous pleasure of *dispensing* it. No stronger proof, indeed, is wanting of the effect of such difficulties in tempering down even the most chivalrous pride, than the necessity to which he found himself reduced in 1816, not only of departing from his resolution never to profit by the sale of his works, but of accepting a sum of money, for copyright, from his publisher, which he had for some time persisted in refusing for himself, and, in the full sincerity of his generous heart, had destined for others.

The injustice and malice to which he soon after became a victim had an equally fatal effect in disenchanting the dream of his existence. Those imaginary, or, at least, retrospective sorrows, in which he had once loved to indulge, and whose tendency it was, through the medium of his fancy, to soften and refine his heart, were now exchanged for a host of actual, ignoble vexations, which it was even more humiliating than painful to encounter. His misanthropy, instead of being, as heretofore, a vague and abstract feeling, without any object to light upon, and losing therefore its acrimony in diffusion, was now, by the hostility he came in contact with, condensed into individual enmities, and narrowed into personal resentments; and from the lofty, and, as it appeared to himself, philosophical luxury of hating mankind in the gross, he was now brought down to the self-humbling necessity of despising them in detail.

By all these influences, so fatal to enthusiasm of character, and forming, most of them, indeed, a part of the ordinary process by which hearts become chilled and hardened in the world, it was impossible but that some material change must have been effected in a disposition at once so susceptible and tenacious of impressions. By compelling him to concentre himself in his own resources and energies, as the only stand now left against the world's injustice, his enemies but succeeded in giving to the principle of self-dependence within him a new force and spring which, however it added to the vigour of his character, could not fail, by bringing Self so much into action, to impair a little its amiableness. Among the changes in his disposition, attributable mainly to this source, may be mentioned that diminished deference to the opinions and feelings of others which, after this compulsory rally of all his powers of resistance, he exhibited. Some portion, no doubt, of this refractoriness may be accounted for by his absence from all those whose slightest word or look would have done more with him than whole volumes of correspondence; but by no cause less powerful and revulsive than the struggle in which he had been committed could a disposition naturally diffident as his was, and diffident even through all this excitement, have been driven into the assumption of a tone so universally defying, and so full, if not of pride in his own pre-eminent powers, of such a contempt for some of the ablest among his contemporaries, as almost implied it. It was, in fact, as has been more than once remarked in these pages, a similar stirring up of all the best and worst elements of his nature, to that which a like rebound against injustice had produced in his youth; — though with a difference in point of force and grandeur, between the two explosions, almost as great as between the outbreaks of a firework and a volcano.

Another consequence of the spirit of defiance now roused in him, and one that tended, perhaps, even more fatally than any yet mentioned, to sully and, for a time, bring down to earth the romance of his character, was the course of life to which, outrunning even the licence of his youth, he abandoned himself at Venice. From this, as from his earlier excesses, the timely warning of disgust soon rescued him; and the connection with Madame Guiccioli which followed, and which, however much to be reprehended, had in it all of marriage that his real marriage wanted, seemed to place, at length, within reach of his affectionate spirit that union and sympathy for which, through life, it had thirsted. But the treasure came too

late; — the pure poetry of the feeling had vanished; and those tears he shed so passionately in the garden at Bologna flowed less, perhaps, from the love which he felt at that moment, than from the saddening consciousness how differently he could have felt formerly. It was, indeed, wholly beyond the power, even of an imagination like his, to go on investing with its own ideal glories a sentiment which, — more from daring and vanity than from any other impulse, — he had taken such pains to tarnish and debase in his own eyes. Accordingly, instead of being able, as once, to elevate and embellish all that interested him, to make an idol of every passing creature of his fancy, and mistake the form of love, which he so often conjured up, for its substance, he now degenerated into the wholly opposite and perverse error of depreciating and making light of what, intrinsically, he valued, and, as the reader has seen, throwing slight and mockery upon a tie in which it was evident some of the best feelings of his nature were wrapped up. That foe to all enthusiasm and romance, the habit of ridicule, had, in proportion as he exchanged the illusions for the realities of life, gained further empire over him; and how far it had, at this time, encroached upon the loftier and fairer regions of his mind may be seen in the pages of Don Juan, — that diversified arena, on which the two Genii, good and evil, that governed his thoughts, hold, with alternate triumph, their ever-powerful combat.

Even this, too, this vein of mockery, — in the excess to which, at last, he carried it, — was but another result of the shock his proud mind had received from those events that had cast him off, branded and heart-stricken, from country and from home. As he himself touchingly says,

> "And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
> 'Tis that I may not weep." [1]

This laughter, — which, in such temperaments, is the near neighbour of tears, — served as a diversion to him from more painful vents of bitterness; and the same philosophical calculation which made the poet of melancholy, Young, declare that "he preferred laughing at the world to being angry with it," led Lord Byron also to settle upon the same conclusion; and to feel, in the misanthropic views he was inclined to take of mankind, that mirth often saved him the pain of hate.

That, with so many drawbacks upon all generous effusions of sentiment, he should still have preserved so much of his native tenderness and ardour as is conspicuous, through all disguises, in his unquestionable love for Madame Guiccioli, and in the still more undoubted zeal with which he now entered, heart and soul, into the great cause of human freedom, wheresoever or by whomsoever asserted [2], — only shows how rich must have been the original stores of sensibility and enthusiasm which even a career such as his could so little chill or exhaust. Most consoling, too, is it to reflect that the few latter years of his life should have been thus visited with a return of that poetic lustre, which, though it never had ceased to surround the bard, had but too much faded away from the character of the man; and that while Love, — reprehensible as it was, but still Love, — had the credit of rescuing him from the only errors that disgraced his maturer years, for Liberty was reserved the proud but mournful triumph of calling the last stage of his glorious course her own, and lighting him, amidst the sympathies of the world, to his grave.

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[1] ["Now my sere fancy 'falls into the yellow
Leaf,' and Imagination droops her pinion,
And the sad truth which hovers o'er my desk
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque:
And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
'Tis that I may not weep; and if I weep,
'Tis that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy, for we must steep
Our hearts first in the depths of Lethe's spring
Ere what we least wish to behold will sleep," &c.
Don Juan, c. iv. st. 4.]

[2] Among his "Detached Thoughts" I find this general passion for liberty thus strikingly expressed. After saying, in reference to his own choice of Venice as a place of residence, "I remembered General Ludlow's domal inscription, 'Omne solum forti patria,' and sat down free in a country which had been one of slavery for centuries," he adds, "But there is *no* freedom, even for *masters*, in the midst of slaves. It makes my blood boil to see the thing. I sometimes wish that I was the owner of Africa, to do at once what Wilberforce will do in time, viz. sweep slavery from her deserts, and look on upon the first dance of their freedom.

"As to political slavery, so general, it is men's own fault: if they *will* be slaves, let them! Yet it is but 'a word and a blow.' See how England formerly, France, Spain, Portugal, America, Switzerland, freed themselves! There is no one instance of a long contest in which *men* did not triumph over systems. If Tyranny misses her *first* spring, she is cowardly as the tiger, and retires to be hunted."

["O Wilberforce! thou man of black renown,
Whose merit none enough can sing or say,
Thou hast struck one immense Colossus down,
Thou moral Washington of Africa."
Don Juan, c. xiv. st. 82.]

CHAPTER XLI.

1821.

RAVENNA. — DIARY. — FAME. — RICHARDSON. — FIELDING. — SCOTT'S NOVELS. — VESTRIS THE COMEDIAN. — FEMALE EDUCATION. — ENNUI. — SWIFT. — DYING AT TOP. — JOHNSON'S VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES. — SHARP THE CONVERSATIONIST. — VACCINATION. — CAMPBELL'S POETS. — HOMER. — TALE OF TROY. — MARINO FALIERO. — SCOTT. — GRILLPARZER. — SARDANAPALUS. — JAVA GAZETTE. — MOORE. — LORD GREY. — LAWRENCE. — THE EDGEWORTHS IN LONDON. — HYPOCHONDRIA. — REGNARD. — THREE AND THIRTY!

Having endeavoured, in this comparison between his present and former self, to account, by what I consider to be their true causes, for the new phenomena which his character, at this period, exhibited, I shall now lay before the reader the Journal by which these remarks were more immediately suggested, and from which I fear they will be thought to have too long detained him.

EXTRACTS FROM A DIARY OF LORD BYRON, 1821.

"Ravenna, January 4. 1821.

"'A sudden thought strikes me.' Let me begin a Journal once more. The last I kept was in Switzerland, in record of a tour made in the Bernese Alps, which I made to send to my sister in 1816, and I suppose that she has it still, for she wrote to me that she was pleased with it. Another, and longer, I kept in 1813-1814, which I gave to Thomas Moore in the same year.

"This morning I gat me up late, as usual — weather bad — bad as England — worse. The snow of last week melting to the sirocco of to-day, so that there were two d—d things at once. Could not even get to ride on horseback in the forest. Stayed at home all the morning — looked at the fire — wondered when the post would come. Post came at the Ave Maria, instead of half-past one o'clock, as it ought. Galignani's Messengers, six in number — a letter from Faenza, but none from England. Very sulky in consequence (for there ought to have been letters), and ate in consequence a copious dinner; for when I am vexed, it makes me swallow quicker — but drank very little.

"I was out of spirits — read the papers — thought what *fame* was, on reading, in a case of murder, that 'Mr. Wych, grocer, at Tunbridge, sold some bacon, flour, cheese, and, it is believed, some plums, to some gipsy woman accused. He had on his counter (I quote faithfully) a *book*, the Life of *Pamela*, which he was *tearing* for *waste* paper, &c. &c. In the cheese was found, &c. and a *leaf* of *Pamela wrapt round the bacon*.' What would Richardson, the vainest and luckiest of *living* authors (*i. e.* while alive) — he who, with Aaron Hill, used to prophesy and chuckle over the presumed fall of Fielding (the *prose* Homer of human nature) and of Pope[1] (the most beautiful of poets) — what would he have said, could he have traced his pages from their place on the French prince's toilets (see Boswell's Johnson[2]) to the grocer's counter and the gipsy-murderess's bacon!!![3]

"What would he have said? what can any body say, save what Solomon said long before us? After all, it is but passing from one counter to another, from the bookseller's to the other tradesman's — grocer or pastry-cook. For my part, I have met with most poetry upon trunks; so that I am apt to consider the trunk-maker as the sexton of authorship.

"Wrote five letters in about half an hour, short and savage, to all my rascally correspondents. Carriage came. Heard the news of three murders at Faenza and Forli — a

[1] ["Richardson seems to have joined Aaron Hill in the cuckoo-song, that Pope had written himself out; and the dislike which he manifests towards Fielding, breaks out too often, and is too anxiously veiled under an affectation of charity and candour, not to lead us to suspect that the author of Tom Jones was at least as obnoxious to Richardson through the success, as from the alleged immorality, of his productions." — Sir Walter Scott: *Prose Works*, vol. iii. p. 19.]

[2] ["A gentleman, who had lately been at Paris, sought, while in a large company at Richardson's villa, to gratify the landlord by informing him that he had seen his Clarissa lying on the king's brother's table. Richardson observing that a part of the company were engaged in conversation apart, affected not to hear what had been said, but took advantage of the first general pause to address the gentleman with — 'Sir, I think you were saying something about' — and then stopped in a flutter of expectation; which his guest mortified by replying, 'A mere trifle, sir, not worth repeating." — *Boswell's Johnson.*]

[3] ["What a master of composition Fielding was! Upon my word, I think the Œdipus Tyrannus, the Alchemist, and Tom Jones the three most perfect plots ever planned. And how charming, how wholesome, Fielding always is! To take him up after Richardson, is like emerging from a sick room heated by stoves into an open lawn on a breezy day in May." — *Coleridge's Table Talk.*]

carabinier, a smuggler, and an attorney — all last night. The two first in a quarrel, the latter by premeditation.

"Three weeks ago — almost a month — the 7th it was — I picked up the commandant, mortally wounded, out of the street; he died in my house; assassins unknown, but presumed political. His brethren wrote from Rome last night to thank me for having assisted him in his last moments. Poor fellow! it was a pity; he was a good soldier, but imprudent. It was eight in the evening when they killed him. We heard the shot; my servants and I ran out, and found him expiring, with five wounds, two whereof mortal — by slugs they seemed. I examined him, but did not go to the dissection next morning.

"Carriage at 8 or so — went to visit La Contessa G. — found her playing on the piano-forte — talked till ten, when the Count, her father, and the no less Count, her brother, came in from the theatre. Play, they said, Alfieri's Fileppo — well received.

"Two days ago the King of Naples passed through Bologna on his way to congress. My servant Luigi brought the news. I had sent him to Bologna for a lamp. How will it end? Time will show.

"Came home at eleven, or rather before. If the road and weather are comfortable, mean to ride to-morrow. High time — almost a week at this work — snow, sirocco, one day — frost and snow the other — sad climate for Italy. But the two seasons, last and present, are extraordinary. Read a Life of Leonardo da Vinci by Rossi — ruminated — wrote this much, and will go to bed.

"January 5. 1821.

"Rose late — dull and drooping — the weather dripping and dense. Snow on the ground, and sirocco above in the sky, like yesterday. Roads up to the horse's belly, so that riding (at least for pleasure) is not very feasible. Added a postscript to my letter to Murray. Read the conclusion, for the fiftieth time (I have read all W. Scott's novels at least fifty times), of the third series of 'Tales of my Landlord,' — grand work — Scotch Fielding, as well as great English poet — wonderful man! I long to get drunk with him.

"Dined versus six o' the clock. Forgot that there was a plum-pudding, (I have added, lately, *eating* to my 'family of vices,') and had dined before I knew it. Drank half a bottle of some sort of spirits — probably spirits of wine; for what they call brandy, rum, &c. &c. here is nothing but spirits of wine, coloured accordingly. Did *not* eat two apples, which were placed by way of dessert. Fed the two cats, the hawk, and the tame (but *not tamed*) crow. Read Mitford's History of Greece — Xenophon's Retreat of the Ten Thousand. Up to this present moment writing, 6 minutes before eight o' the clock — French hours, not Italian.

"Hear the carriage — order pistols and great coat, as usual — necessary articles. Weather cold — carriage open, and inhabitants somewhat savage — rather treacherous and highly inflamed by politics. Fine fellows, though, good materials for a nation. Out of chaos God made a world, and out of high passions comes a people.

"Clock strikes — going out to make love. Somewhat perilous, but not disagreeable. Memorandum — a new screen put up to-day. It is rather antique, but will do with a little repair.

"Thaw continues — hopeful that riding may be practicable to-morrow. Sent the papers to All[1]. — grand events coming.

"11 o' the clock and nine minutes. Visited La Contessa G. Nata G. G. Found her beginning my letter of answer to the thanks of Alessio del Pinto of Rome for assisting his brother the late Commandant in his last moments, as I had begged her to pen my reply for the purer Italian, I being an ultramontane, little skilled in the set phrase of Tuscany. Cut short the letter — finish it another day. Talked of Italy, patriotism, Alfieri, Madame Albany, and other branches of learning. Also Sallust's Conspiracy of Catiline, and the War of Jugurtha. At 9 came in her brother, Il Conte Pietro — at 10, her father, Conte Ruggiero.

"Talked of various modes of warfare — of the Hungarian and Highland modes of broad-sword exercise, in both whereof I was once a moderate 'master of fence.' Settled that the R. will break out on the 7th or 8th of March, in which appointment I should trust, had it not been settled that it was to have broken out in October, 1820. But those Bolognese shirked the Romagnuoles.

"'It is all one to Ranger.' One must not be particular, but take rebellion when it lies in the way. Come home — read the 'Ten Thousand' again, and will go to bed.

"Mem. — Ordered Fletcher (at four o'clock this afternoon) to copy out seven or eight apophthegms of Bacon [1], in which I have detected such blunders as a schoolboy might detect rather than commit. Such are the sages! What must they be, when such as I can stumble on their mistakes or mistatements? I will go to bed, for I find that I grow cynical.

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[1] [See Works, p. 808.]

" January 6. 1821.

" Mist — thaw — slop — rain. No stirring out on horseback. Read Spence's Anecdotes. Pope a fine fellow — always thought him so. Corrected blunders in *nine* apophthegms of Bacon — all historical — and read Mitford's Greece. Wrote an epigram. Turned to a passage in Guinguené — ditto in Lord Holland's Lope de Vega.[1] Wrote a note on Don Juan.

" At eight went out to visit. Heard a little music — like music. Talked with Count Pietro G. of the Italian comedian Vestris, who is now at Rome — have seen him often act in Venice — a good actor — very. Somewhat of a mannerist; but excellent in broad comedy, as well as in the sentimental pathetic. He has made me frequently laugh and cry, neither of which is now a very easy matter — at least, for a player to produce in me.

" Thought of the state of women under the ancient Greeks — convenient enough. Present state a remnant of the barbarism of the chivalric and feudal ages — artificial and unnatural. They ought to mind home — and be well fed and clothed — but not mixed in society. Well educated, too, in religion — but to read neither poetry nor politics — nothing but books of piety and cookery. Music — drawing — dancing — also a little gardening and ploughing now and then. I have seen them mending the roads in Epirus with good success. Why not, as well as hay-making and milking?

" Came home, and read Mitford again, and played with my mastiff — gave him his supper. Made another reading to the epigram, but the turn the same. To-night at the theatre, there being a prince on his throne in the last scene of the comedy, — the audience laughed, and asked him for a *Constitution*. This shows the state of the public mind here, as well as the assassinations. It won't do. There must be an universal republic, — and there ought to be.

" The crow is lame of a leg — wonder how it happened — some fool trod upon his toe, I suppose. The falcon pretty brisk — the cats large and noisy — the monkeys I have not looked to since the cold weather, as they suffer by being brought up. Horses must be gay — get a ride as soon as weather serves. Deuced muggy still — an Italian winter is a sad thing, but all the other seasons are charming.

" What is the reason that I have been, all my lifetime, more or less *ennuyé?* and that, if any thing, I am rather less so now than I was at twenty, as far as my recollection serves? I do not know how to answer this, but presume that it is constitutional, — as well as the waking in low spirits, which I have invariably done for many years. Temperance and exercise, which I have practised at times, and for a long time together vigorously and violently, made little or no difference. Violent passions did; — when under their immediate influence — it is odd, but — I was in agitated, but *not* in depressed, spirits.

" A dose of salts has the effect of a temporary inebriation, like light champagne, upon me. But wine and spirits make me sullen and savage to ferocity — silent, however, and retiring, and not quarrelsome, if not spoken to. Swimming also raises my spirits, — but in general they are low, and get daily lower. That is *hopeless;* for I do not think I am so much *ennuyé* as I was at nineteen. The proof is, that then I must game, or drink, or be in motion of some kind, or I was miserable. At present, I can mope in quietness; and like being alone better than any company — except the lady's whom I serve. But I feel a something, which makes me think that, if I ever reach near to old age, like Swift, 'I shall die at top' first.[2] Only I do not dread idiotism or madness so much as he did. On the contrary, I think some quieter stages of both must be preferable to much of what men think the possession of their senses.

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[1] [" Till Voltaire appeared, there was no nation more ignorant of its neighbours' literature than the French. He first exposed, and then corrected, this neglect in his countrymen. There is no writer to whom the authors of other nations, especially of England, are so indebted for the extension of their fame in France, and, through France, in Europe. There is no critic who has employed more time, wit, ingenuity, and diligence in promoting the literary intercourse between country and country, and in celebrating in one language the triumphs of another. Yet, by a strange fatality, he is constantly represented as the enemy of all literature but his own; and Spaniards, Englishmen, and Italians vie with each other in inveighing against his occasional exaggeration of faulty passages; the authors of which, till he pointed out their beauties, were hardly known beyond the country in which their language was spoken. Those who feel such indignation at his misrepresentations and oversights would find it difficult to produce a critic in any modern language, who, in speaking of foreign literature, is better informed or more candid than Voltaire; and they certainly never would be able to discover one who to those qualities unites so much sagacity and liveliness." — Vol. i. p. 215. ed. 1817.]

[2] [" I remember as I and others were taking with Swift an evening walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he stopped short: we passed on; but perceiving he did not follow us, I went back and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upwards at a noble elm, which, in its uppermost branches, was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, 'I shall be like that tree, I shall die at top." — Dr. Young, in his *Letter to Richardson.*]

"January 7. 1821. Sunday.

"Still rain — mist — snow — drizzle — and all the incalculable combinations of a climate where heat and cold struggle for mastery. Read Spence, and turned over Roscoe, to find a passage I have not found. Read the fourth vol. of W. Scott's second series of 'Tales of my Landlord.' Dined. Read the Lugano Gazette. Read — I forget what. At eight went to conversazione. Found there the Countess Geltrude, Betti V. and her husband, and others. Pretty black-eyed woman that — *only* nineteen — same age as Teresa, who is prettier, though.

"The Count Pietro G. took me aside to say that the Patriots have had notice from Forli (twenty miles off) that to-night the government and its party mean to strike a stroke — that the Cardinal here has had orders to make several arrests immediately, and that, in consequence, the Liberals are arming, and have posted patroles in the streets, to sound the alarm and give notice to fight for it.

"He asked me 'what should be done?' I answered, 'Fight for it, rather than be taken in detail;' and offered, if any of them are in immediate apprehension of arrest, to receive them in my house (which is defensible), and to defend them, with my servants and themselves (we have arms and ammunition), as long as we can, — or to try to get them away under cloud of night. On going home, I offered him the pistols which I had about me — but he refused, but said he would come off to me in case of accidents.

"It wants half an hour of midnight, and rains; — as Gibbet says, 'a fine night for their enterprise — dark as hell, and blows like the devil.'[1] If the row don't happen *now*, it must soon. I thought that their system of shooting people would soon produce a re-action — and now it seems coming. I will do what I can in the way of combat, though a little out of exercise. The cause is a good one.

"Turned over and over half a score of books for the passage in question, and can't find it. Expect to hear the drum and the musquetry momently (for they swear to resist, and are right,) — but I hear nothing, as yet, save the plash of the rain and the gusts of the wind at intervals. Don't like to go to bed, because I hate to be waked, and would rather sit up for the row, if there is to be one.

"Mended the fire — have got the arms — and a book or two, which I shall turn over. I know little of their numbers, but think the Carbonari strong enough to beat the troops, even here. With twenty men this house might be defended for twenty-four hours against any force to be brought against it, *now* in this place, for the same time; and, in such a time, the country would have notice, and would rise, — if ever they *will* rise, of which there is some doubt. In the mean time, I may as well read as do any thing else, being alone.

"January 8. 1821. Monday.

"Rose, and found Count P. G. in my apartments. Sent away the servant. Told me that, according to the best information, the Government had not issued orders for the arrests apprehended; that the attack in Forli had not taken place (as expected) by the Sanfedisti — the opponents of the Carbonari or Liberals — and that, as yet, they are still in apprehension only. Asked me for some arms of a better sort, which I gave him. Settled that, in case of a row, the Liberals were to assemble *here* (with me), and that he had given the word to Vincenzo G. and others of the *Chiefs* for that purpose. He himself and father are going to the chase in the forest; but V. G. is to come to me, and an express to be sent off to him, P. G., if any thing occurs. Concerted operations. They are to seize — but no matter.

"I advised them to attack in detail, and in different parties, in different *places* (though at the *same* time), so as to divide the attention of the troops, who, though few, yet being disciplined, would beat any body of people (not trained) in a regular fight — unless dispersed in small parties, and distracted with different assaults. Offered to let them assemble here if they choose. It is a strongish post — narrow street, commanded from within — and tenable walls.

"Dined. Tried on a new coat. Letter to Murray, with corrections of Bacon's Apophthegms and an epigram — the *latter not* for publication. At eight went to Teresa, Countess G. At nine and a half came in Il Conte P. and Count P. G. Talked of a certain proclamation lately issued. Count R. G. had been with * * (the * *), to sound him about the arrests. He, * *, is a *trimmer*, and deals, at present, his cards with both hands. If he don't mind, they'll be full. * * pretends (*I* doubt him — *they* don't, — we shall see) that there is no such order, and seems staggered by the immense exertions of the Neapolitans, and the fierce spirit of the Liberals here. The truth is, that * * cares for little but his place (which is a good one), and wishes to play pretty with both parties. He has changed his mind thirty times these last three moons, to my know-

[1] [Beaux Stratagem, act iv. sc. 2.]

ledge, for he corresponds with me. But he is not a bloody fellow—only an avaricious one.

"It seems that, just at this moment (as Lydia Languish says), there will be no elopement after all. I wish that I had known as much last night—or, rather, this morning—I should have gone to bed two hours earlier. And yet I ought not to complain; for, though it is a sirocco, and heavy rain, I have not *yawned* for these two days.

"Came home—read History of Greece—before dinner had read Walter Scott's Rob Roy. Wrote address to the letter in answer to Alessio del Pinto, who has thanked me for helping his brother (the late Commandant, murdered here last month) in his last moments. Have told him I only did a duty of humanity—as is true. The brother lives at Rome.

"Mended the fire with some 'sgobole' (a Romagnuole word), and gave the falcon some water. Drank some Seltzer-water. Mem.—received to-day a print, or etching, of the story of Ugolino, by an Italian painter—different, of course, from Sir Joshua Reynolds's, and I think (as far as recollection goes) *no worse*, for Reynolds's is not good in history.[1] Tore a button in my new coat.

"I wonder what figure these Italians will make in a regular row. I sometimes think that, like the Irishman's gun (somebody had sold him a crooked one), they will only do for 'shooting round a corner;' at least, this sort of shooting has been the late tenor of their exploits. And yet there are materials in this people, and a noble energy, if well directed. But who is to direct them? No matter. Out of such times heroes spring. Difficulties are the hotbeds of high spirits, and Freedom the mother of the few virtues incident to human nature.

"Tuesday, January 9. 1821.

"Rose—the day fine. Ordered the horses; but Lega (my *secretary*, an Italianism for steward or chief servant) coming to tell me that the painter had finished the work in fresco, for the room he has been employed on lately, I went to see it before I set out. The painter has not copied badly the prints from Titian, &c. considering all things.

"Dined. Read Johnson's 'Vanity of Human Wishes,'—all the examples and mode of giving them sublime, as well as the latter part, with the exception of an occasional couplet. I do not so much admire the opening. I remember an observation of Sharpe's, (the *Conversationist*, as he was called in London, and a very clever man,) that the first line of this poem was superfluous, and that Pope (the best of poets, *I* think,) would have begun at once, only changing the punctuation—

"'Survey mankind from China to Peru.'[2]

The former line, 'Let observation,' &c. is certainly heavy and useless. But 'tis a grand poem—and *so true!*—true as the 10th of Juvenal himself. The lapse of ages *changes* all things—time—language—the earth—the bounds of the sea—the stars of the sky, and every thing 'about, around, and underneath' man, *except man himself*, who has always been, and always will be, an unlucky rascal. The infinite variety of lives conduct but to death, and the infinity of wishes lead but to disappointment.[3] All the discoveries which have yet been made have multiplied little but existence.[4] An extirpated disease

[1] ["The subject is said, by Cumberland, to have been suggested to Sir Joshua by Goldsmith. The merit lies in the execution; and even this seems of a disputable excellence. The lofty and stern sufferer of Dante appears on Reynolds's canvass like a famished mendicant, deficient in any commanding qualities of intellect, and regardless of his dying children who cluster around his knees."—*Brit. Painters*, vol. i. p. 268.

"The dungeon of Bonnivard" (the Prisoner of Chillon) "is, like that of Ugolino, a subject too dismal even for the power of the painter or poet to counteract its horrors. It is the more disagreeable, as affording human hope no anchor to rest upon, and describing the sufferer, though a man of talents and virtues, as altogether inert and powerless under his accumulated sufferings."—Sir Walter Scott.]

[2] ["There is an offence against simplicity which should be shunned; though it occurs often in Johnson, and though the abstract terms, affected by him, give a kind of false pomp to the style, assuming the air of personification. He thus commences his imitation of the tenth satire of Juvenal:—

'Let observation, with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru.'

Dryden and Pope would have been satisfied with the second line, and would have avoided both the tautology and pomposity of the first."—*Sharp's Letters to a Young Friend at College; Essays*, p. 47. ed. 1834.]

[3] ["Time hovers o'er, impatient to destroy,
And shuts up all the passages of joy:
In vain their gifts the bounteous seasons pour,
The fruit autumnal, and the vernal flow'r;
With listless eyes the dotard views the store,
He views, and wonders that they please no more."
Vanity of Human Wishes.]

[4] ["What opposite discoveries we have seen!
(Signs of true genius, and of empty pockets)
One makes new noses, one a guillotine,
One breaks your bones, one sets them in the sockets:
But vaccination certainly has been
A kind antithesis to Congreve's rockets," &c.
Don Juan, c. i. st. 129.]

is succeeded by some new pestilence; and a discovered world has brought little to the old one, except the p— first and freedom afterwards — the *latter* a fine thing, particularly as they gave it to Europe in exchange for slavery. But it is doubtful whether 'the Sovereigns' would not think the *first* the best present of the two to their subjects.

"At eight went out — heard some news. They say the King of Naples has declared by couriers from Florence, to the *Powers* (as they call now those wretches with crowns), that his Constitution was compulsive, &c. &c. and that the Austrian barbarians are placed again on *war* pay, and will march. Let them — 'they come like sacrifices in their trim,' the hounds of hell! Let it still be a hope to see their bones piled like those of the human dogs at Morat, in Switzerland, which I have seen. [1]

"Heard some music. At nine the usual visitors — news, *war*, or rumours of war. Consulted with P. G. &c. &c. They mean to *insurrect* here, and are to honour me with a call thereupon. I shall not fall back; though I don't think them in force or heart sufficient to make much of it. But, *onward!* — it is now the time to act, and what signifies *self*, if a single spark of that which would be worthy of the past can be bequeathed unquenchedly to the future? It is not one man, nor a million, but the *spirit* of liberty which must be spread. The waves which dash upon the shore are, one by one, broken, but yet the *ocean* conquers, nevertheless. It overwhelms the Armada, it wears the rock, and, if the *Neptunians* are to be believed, it has not only destroyed, but made a world. In like manner, whatever the sacrifice of individuals, the great cause will gather strength, sweep down what is rugged, and fertilise (for *sea-weed* is *manure*) what is cultivable. And so, the mere selfish calculation ought never to be made on such occasions; and, at present, it shall not be computed by me. I was never a good arithmetician of chances, and shall not commence now.

"January 10. 1821.

"Day fine — rained only in the morning. Looked over accounts. Read Campbell's Poets — marked errors of Tom (the author) for correction. Dined — went out — music — Tyrolese air, with variations. Sustained the cause of the original simple air against the variations of the Italian school.

"Politics somewhat tempestuous, and cloudier daily. To-morrow being foreign post-day, probably something more will be known.

"Came home — read. Corrected Tom Campbell's slips of the pen. A good work, though — style affected — but his defence of Pope is glorious. [2] To be sure, it is his *own cause* too,—but no matter, it is very good, and does him great credit.

"Midnight.

"I have been turning over different *Lives* of the Poets. I rarely read their works, unless an occasional flight over the classical ones, Pope, Dryden, Johnson, Gray, and those who approach them nearest (I leave the *rant* of the rest to the *cant* of the day), and — I had made several reflections, but I feel sleepy, and may as well go to bed.

"January 11. 1821.

"Read the letters. Corrected the tragedy and the 'Hints from Horace.' Dined, and got into better spirits. Went out — returned — finished letters, five in number. Read Poets, and an anecdote in Spence.

"All[i]. writes to me that the Pope, and Duke of Tuscany, and King of Sardinia, have also been called to Congress; but the Pope will only deal there by proxy. So the interests of millions are in the hands of about twenty coxcombs, at a place called Leibach!

"I should almost regret that my own affairs went well, when those of nations are in peril. If the interests of mankind could be essentially bettered (particularly of these oppressed Italians), I should not so much mind my own 'sma peculiar.' God grant us all better times, or more philosophy!

"In reading, I have just chanced upon an expression of Tom Campbell's; — speaking of Collins, he says that 'no reader cares any more about the *characteristic manners* of his Eclogues than about the authenticity of the tale of Troy.' 'Tis false — we *do* care about 'the authenticity of the tale of Troy.' I have stood upon that plain *daily*, for more than a month in 1810; and if any thing diminished my pleasure, it was that the blackguard Bryant had impugned its veracity. [3] It is true I read 'Homer Travestied' (the first twelve books), because Hobhouse and others bored me with their learned localities, and I love quizzing. But I still venerated the grand original as the truth of *history* (in

[1] [See Childe Harold, c. iii. st. 64. and note.]

[2] [See his "Specimens of the British Poets," vol. i. p. 260.]

[3] [—— "I've stood upon Achilles' tomb,
And heard Troy doubted;—time will doubt of Rome."
Don Juan, c. iv. st. 101.]

the material *facts*) and of *place*. Otherwise, it would have given me no delight. Who will persuade me, when I reclined upon a mighty tomb, that it did not contain a hero? — its very magnitude proved this. Men do not labour over the ignoble and petty dead — and why should not the *dead* be *Homer*'s dead? The secret of Tom Campbell's defence of *inaccuracy* in costume and description is, that his Gertrude, &c. has no more locality in common with Pennsylvania than with Penmanmaur. It is notoriously full of grossly false scenery, as all Americans declare, though they praise parts of the poem. It is thus that self-love for ever creeps out, like a snake, to sting any thing which happens, even accidentally, to stumble upon it.

"January 12. 1821.

"The weather still so humid and impracticable, that London, in its most oppressive fogs, were a summer-bower to this mist and sirocco, which has now lasted (but with one day's interval), chequered with snow or heavy rain only, since the 30th of December, 1820. It is so far lucky that I have a literary turn; — but it is very tiresome not to be able to stir out, in comfort, on any horse but Pegasus, for so many days. The roads are even worse than the weather, by the long splashing, and the heavy soil, and the growth of the waters.

"Read the Poets — English, that is to say — out of Campbell's edition. There is a good deal of taffeta in some of Tom's prefatory phrases, but his work is good as a whole. I like him best, though, in his own poetry.

"Murray writes that they want to act the Tragedy of Marino Faliero — more fools they, it was written for the closet. I have protested against this piece of usurpation, (which, it seems, is legal for managers over any printed work, against the author's will,) and I hope they will not attempt it. Why don't they bring out some of the numberless aspirants for theatrical celebrity, now encumbering their shelves, instead of lugging me out of the library? I have written a fierce protest against any such attempt; but I still would hope that it will not be necessary, and that they will see, at once, that it is not intended for the stage. It is too regular — the time, twenty-four hours — the change of place not frequent — nothing *melo*-dramatic — no surprises, no starts, nor trap-doors, nor opportunities 'for tossing their heads and kicking their heels' — and no *love* — the grand ingredient of a modern play.

"I have found out the seal cut on Murray's letter. It is meant for Walter Scott — or *Sir* Walter — he is the first poet knighted since Sir Richard Blackmore. But it does not do him justice. Scott's — particularly when he recites — is a very intelligent countenance, and this seal says nothing.

"Scott is certainly the most wonderful writer of the day. His novels are a new literature in themselves, and his poetry as good as any — if not better (only on an erroneous system) — and only ceased to be so popular, because the vulgar learned were tired of hearing 'Aristides called the Just,' and Scott the Best, and ostracised him.

"I like him, too, for his manliness of character, for the extreme pleasantness of his conversation, and his good-nature towards myself, personally. May he prosper! — for he deserves it. I know no reading to which I fall with such alacrity as a work of W. Scott's. I shall give the seal, with his bust on it, to Madame la Comtesse G. this evening, who will be curious to have the effigies of a man so celebrated.

"How strange are our thoughts, &c. &c. &c. [1]

"Midnight.

"Read the Italian translation by Guido Sorelli of the German Grillparzer — a devil of a name, to be sure, for posterity; but they *must* learn to pronounce it. With all the allowance for a *translation*, and above all, an *Italian* translation (they are the very worst of translators, except from the Classics — Annibale Caro, for instance — and *there*, the bastardy of their language helps them, as, by way of *looking legitimate*, they ape their father's tongue); — but with every allowance for such a disadvantage, the tragedy of Sappho is superb and sublime! There is no denying it. The man has done a great thing in writing that play. And *who is he?* I know him not; but *ages will*. 'Tis a high intellect.

"I must premise, however, that I have read *nothing* of Adolph Müllner's (the author of 'Guilt'), and much less of Goethe, and Schiller, and Wieland, than I could wish. I only know them through the medium of English, French, and Italian translations. Of the *real* language I know absolutely nothing, — except oaths learned from postillions and officers in a squabble. I can *swear* in German potently, when I like — 'Sacrament —

[1] Here follows a long passage, already extracted, relative to his early friend, Edward Noel Long. [See *antè*, p. 31.]

Verfluchter — Hundsfott' — and so forth[1]; but I have little less of their energetic conversation.

"I like, however, their women, (I was once *so desperately* in love with a German woman, Constance,) and all that I have read, translated, of their writings, and all that I have seen on the Rhine of their country and people — all, except the Austrians, whom I abhor, loathe, and — I cannot find words for my hate of them, and should be sorry to find deeds correspondent to my hate; for I abhor cruelty more than I abhor the Austrians — except on an impulse, and then I am savage — but not deliberately so.

"Grillparzer is grand — antique — *not so simple* as the ancients, but very simple for a modern — too Madame de Staël*ish*, now and then — but altogether a great and goodly writer.

"January 13. 1821, Saturday.

"Sketched the outline and Drams. Pers. of an intended tragedy of Sardanapalus, which I have for some time meditated. Took the names from Diodorus Siculus, (I know the history of Sardanapalus, and have known it since I was twelve years old,) and read over a passage in the ninth vol. octavo, of Mitford's Greece, where he rather vindicates the memory of this last of the Assyrians.

"Dined — news come — the *Powers* mean to war with the peoples. The intelligence seems positive — let it be so — they will be beaten in the end. The king-times are fast finishing. There will be blood shed like water, and tears like mist; but the peoples will conquer in the end. I shall not live to see it, but I foresee it.

"I carried Teresa the Italian translation of Grillparzer's Sappho, which she promises to read. She quarrelled with me, because I said that love was *not the loftiest* theme for true tragedy; and, having the advantage of her native language, and natural female eloquence, she overcame my fewer arguments. I believe she was right. I must put more love into 'Sardanapalus' than I intended. I I speak, of course, *if* the times will allow me leisure. That *if* will hardly be a peace-maker.

"January 14. 1821.

"Turned over Seneca's tragedies. Wrote the opening lines of the intended tragedy of Sardanapalus. Rode out some miles into the forest. Misty and rainy. Returned — dined — wrote some more of my tragedy.

"Read Diodorus Siculus — turned over Seneca, and some other books. Wrote some more of the tragedy. Took a glass of grog. After having ridden hard in rainy weather, and scribbled, and scribbled again, the spirits (at least mine) need a little exhilaration, and I don't like laudanum now as I used to do. So I have mixed a glass of strong waters and single waters, which I shall now proceed to empty. Therefore and thereunto I conclude this day's diary.

"The effect of all wines and spirits upon me is, however, strange. It *scttles*, but it makes me gloomy — gloomy at the very moment of their effect, and not gay hardly ever. But it composes for a time, though sullenly.

"January 15. 1821.

"Weather fine. Received visit. Rode out into the forest — fired pistols. Returned home — dined — dipped into a volume of Mitford's Greece — wrote part of a scene of 'Sardanapalus.' Went out — heard some music — heard some politics. More ministers from the other Italian powers gone to Congress. War seems certain — in that case, it will be a savage one. Talked over various important matters with one of the initiated. At ten and half returned home.

"I have just thought of something odd. In the year 1814, Moore ('the poet,' *par excellence*, and he deserves it) and I were going together, in the same carriage, to dine with Earl Grey, the Capo Politico of the remaining Whigs. Murray, the magnificent (the illustrious publisher of that name), had just sent me a Java gazette — I know not why, or wherefore. Pulling it out, by way of curiosity, we found it to contain a dispute (the said Java gazette) on Moore's merits and mine. I think, if I had been there, that I could have saved them the trouble of disputing on the subject. But, there is *fame* for you at six and twenty! Alexander had conquered India at the same age; but I doubt if he was disputed about, or his conquests compared with those of Indian Bacchus, at Java.

"It was a great fame to be named with Moore; greater to be compared with him; greatest — *pleasure*, at least — to be *with* him; and, surely, an odd coincidence, that we should be dining together while they were

[1] ["On with the horses; off to Canterbury!
Tramp, tramp o'er pebble, and splash, splash through puddle;
Hurrah! how swiftly speeds the post so merry!
Not like slow Germany, wherein they muddle
Along the road, as if they went to bury
Their fare; and also pause besides, to fuddle
With 'schnapps' — sad dogs! whom 'Hundsfott' or 'Verfluchter,'
Affect no more than lightning a conductor."
Don Juan, c. x. st. 71.]

quarrelling about us beyond the equinoctial line.

"Well, the same evening, I met Lawrence the painter, and heard one of Lord Grey's daughters (a fine, tall, spirit-looking girl, with much of the *patrician, thorough-bred look* of her father, which I dote upon) play on the harp, so modestly and ingenuously, that she *looked music*. Well, I would rather have had my talk with Lawrence (who talked delightfully) and heard the girl, than have had all the fame of Moore and me put together.

"The only pleasure of fame is that it paves the way to pleasure; and the more intellectual our pleasure, the better for the pleasure and for us too. It was, however, agreeable to have heard our fame before dinner, and a girl's harp after.

"January 16. 1821.

"Read — rode — fired pistols — returned — dined — wrote — visited — heard music — talked nonsense — and went home.

"Wrote part of a Tragedy — advanced in Act 1st with 'all deliberate speed.' Bought a blanket. The weather is still muggy as a London May — mist, mizzle, the air replete with Scotticisms, which, though fine in the descriptions of Ossian, are somewhat tiresome in real, prosaic perspective. Politics still mysterious.

"January 17. 1821.

"Rode i' the forest — fired pistols — dined. Arrived a packet of books from England and Lombardy — English, Italian, French, and Latin. Read till eight — went out.

"January 18. 1821.

"To-day, the post arriving late, did not ride. Read letters — only two gazettes instead of twelve now due. Made Lega write to that negligent Galignani, and added a postscript. Dined.

"At eight proposed to go out. Lega came in with a letter about a bill *unpaid* at Venice, which I thought paid months ago. I flew into a paroxysm of rage, which almost made me faint. I have not been well ever since. I deserve it for being such a fool — but it *was* provoking — a set of scoundrels! It is, however, but five and twenty pounds.

"January 19. 1821.

"Rode. Winter's wind somewhat more unkind than ingratitude itself, though Shakspeare says otherwise.[1] At least, I am so much more accustomed to meet with ingratitude than the north wind, that I thought the latter the sharper of the two. I had met with both in the course of the twenty-four hours, so could judge.

"Thought of a plan of education for my daughter Allegra, who ought to begin soon with her studies. Wrote a letter — afterwards a postscript. Rather in low spirits — certainly hippish — liver touched — will take a dose of salts.

"I have been reading the Life, by himself and daughter, of Mr. R. L. Edgeworth, the father of *the* Miss Edgeworth. It is altogether a great name. In 1813, I recollect to have met them in the fashionable world of London (of which I then formed an item, a fraction, the segment of a circle, the unit of a million, the nothing of something) in the assemblies of the hour, and at a breakfast of Sir Humphry and Lady Davy's, to which I was invited for the nonce. I had been the lion of 1812: Miss Edgeworth and Madame de Stael, with 'the Cossack,' towards the end of 1813, were the exhibitions of the succeeding year.[2]

"I thought Edgeworth a fine old fellow, of a clarety, elderly, red complexion, but active, brisk, and endless. He was seventy, but did not look fifty — no, nor forty-eight even. I had seen poor Fitzpatrick not very long before — a man of pleasure, wit, eloquence, all things.[3] He tottered — but still talked like a gentleman, though feebly. Edgeworth bounced about, and talked loud and long; but he seemed neither weakly nor decrepit, and hardly old.

"He began by telling 'that he had given Dr. Parr a dressing, who had taken him for

[1] ["Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude," &c.
As You Like It, act ii. sc. 7.]

[2] ["May 11. 1813. Mr., Mrs., and Miss Edgeworth are just come over from Ireland, and are the great objects of curiosity and attention. Miss Edgeworth is a most agreeable person, very natural, clever, and well-informed, without the least pretensions of authorship. She had never been in a large society before, and she was followed and courted by all the persons of distinction in London, with an avidity almost without example." — Sir J. Mackintosh: *Life*, vol. ii. p. 262.]

[3] [General Richard Fitzpatrick, brother of the Earl of Upper Ossory, and, during forty years, the intimate friend of Fox. He was secretary at war to the ministry of 1783; to which situation he was again appointed in 1806, during the Fox and Grenville administration. He wrote various poetical trifles; and among others a political eclogue entitled "The Lyars," considered by Mr. Matthias the most finished of all the productions of the authors of the Rolliad. (See Pursuits of Literature.) He also composed the epitaph, inscribed on his monument in the church-yard of Sunning Hill, Berks. See Gent. Mag. vol. lxxxvi. p. 99. He died in 1813.]

an Irish bogtrotter,' &c. &c. Now I, who know Dr. Parr, and who know (*not* by experience — for I never should have presumed so far as to contend with him — but by hearing him *with* others, and *of* others) that it is not so easy a matter to 'dress him,' thought Mr. Edgeworth an assertor of what was not true. He could not have stood before Parr an instant. For the rest, he seemed intelligent, vehement, vivacious, and full of life. He bids fair for a hundred years.[1]

"He was not much admired in London, and I remember a 'ryghte merrie' and conceited jest which was rife among the gallants of the day, — viz. a paper had been presented for the *recall of Mrs. Siddons to the stage*, (she having lately taken leave, to the loss of ages, — for nothing ever was, or can be, like her,) to which all men had been called to subscribe. Whereupon Thomas Moore, of profane and poetical memory, did propose that a similar paper should be *sub*scribed and *circum*scribed 'for the recall of Mr. Edgeworth to Ireland.'[2]

"The fact was — every body cared more about *her*. She was a nice little unassuming 'Jeanie Deans-looking body,' as we Scotch say — and, if not handsome, certainly not ill-looking. Her conversation was as quiet as herself. One would never have guessed she could write *her name;* whereas her father talked, *not* as if he could write nothing else, but as if nothing else was worth writing.

"As for Mrs. Edgeworth, I forget — except that I think she was the youngest of the party. Altogether, they were an excellent cage of the kind; and succeeded for two months, till the landing of Madame de Stael.

"To turn from them to their works, I admire them; but they excite no feeling, and they leave no love — except for some Irish steward or postillion. However, the impression of intellect and prudence is profound — and may be useful.[3]

" January 21. 1821.

"Rode—fired pistols. Read from Grimm's Correspondence. Dined — went out — heard music — returned — wrote a letter to the Lord Chamberlain to request him to prevent the theatres from representing the Doge, which the Italian papers say that they are going to act. This is pretty work — what! without asking my consent, and even in opposition to it!

" January 21. 1821.

"Fine, clear, frosty day — that is to say, an Italian frost, for their winters hardly get beyond snow; for which reason nobody knows how to skate (or skait) — a Dutch and English accomplishment. Rode out, as usual, and fired pistols. Good shooting — broke four common, and rather small, bottles, in four shots, at fourteen paces, with a common pair of pistols and indifferent powder. Almost as good *wafering* or shooting — considering the difference of powder and pistol, — as when, in 1809, 1810, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, it was my luck to split walking-sticks, wafers, half-crowns, shillings, and even the *eye* of a walking-stick, at twelve paces, with a single bullet — and all by *eye* and calculation; for my hand is not steady, and apt to change with the very weather. To the prowess which I here note, Joe Manton and others can bear testimony; for the former taught, and the latter has seen me do, these feats.

"Dined — visited — came home — read. Remarked on an anecdote in Grimm's Correspondence, which says that 'Regnard et la plûpart des poëtes comiques étaient gens bilieux et mélancoliques; et que M. de Voltaire, qui est très gai, n'a jamais fait que des tragedies — et que la comédie gaie est le seul genre où il n'ait point réussi. C'est que celui qui rit et celui qui fait rire sont deux hommes fort différens.' — Vol. VI.

"At this moment I feel as bilious as the best comic writer of them all, (even as Regnard himself, the next to Molière, who has written some of the best comedies in any language, and who is supposed to have committed suicide[4],) and am not in spirits to continue my proposed tragedy of Sardanapalus, which I have, for some days, ceased to compose.

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[1] [Mr. Edgeworth died in 1817, in his seventy-fourth year.]

[2] In this I rather think he was misinformed; whatever merit there may be in the jest, I have not, as far as I can recollect, the slightest claim to it.

[3] ["In my first enthusiasm of admiration, I thought that Miss Edgeworth had first made fiction useful; but every fiction since Homer has taught friendship, patriotism, generosity, contempt of death. These are the highest virtues; and the fictions which taught them were therefore of the highest, though not of unmixed utility. Miss Edgeworth inculcates *prudence*, and the many virtues of that family. Are these excellent virtues higher or more useful than those of fortitude and benevolence? Certainly not. Where, then, is Miss Edgeworth's merit? Her merit — her extraordinary merit, both as a moralist and as a woman of genius—consists in her having selected a class of virtues far more difficult to treat as the subject of fiction than others, and which had therefore been left by former writers to her."—Sir James Mackintosh: *Life*, vol. ii. p. 42.]

[4] [Regnard died in 1709, in his fifty-second year. It has been said that he died of chagrin, nay, that he voluntarily shortened his days; but these reports are contradicted in the Dictionnaire Historique, ed. 1811.]

"To-morrow is my birth-day — that is to say, at twelve o' the clock, midnight, *i. e.* in twelve minutes, I shall have completed thirty and three years of age!!! — and I go to my bed with a heaviness of heart at having lived so long, and to so little purpose.

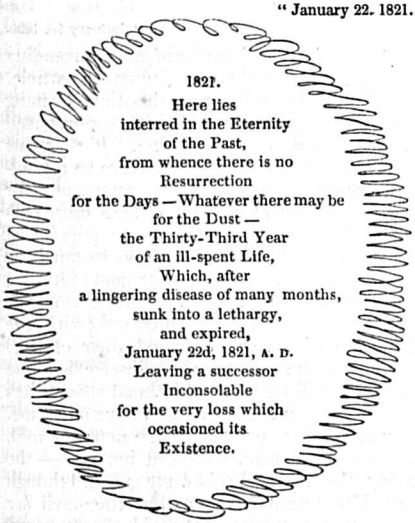
"It is three minutes past twelve. — 'Tis the middle of the night by the castle clock,' and I am now thirty-three!

> "Eheu, fugaces, Posthume, Posthume,
> Labuntur anni;—

but I don't regret them so much for what I have done, as for what I *might* have done.

> "Through life's road, so dim and dirty,
> I have dragged to three-and-thirty.
> What have these years left to me?
> Nothing — except thirty-three.

"January 22. 1821.



CHAPTER XLII.

1821.

RAVENNA. — DIARY CONTINUED. — OPERATIONS OF THE CARBONARI. — LORD SYDNEY OSBORNE. — SOCRATES. — CHARITY. — CAIN. — FRANCESCA OF RIMINI. — TIBERIUS. — WHAT IS POETRY? — PAST AND FUTURE. — HOPE AND FEAR. — DEATH. — FREDERICK SCHLEGEL. — GENTLENESS OF DANTE. — VICAR OF WAKEFIELD. — LAZINESS. — GRIMM'S CORRESPONDENCE. — ST. LAMBERT AND THOMSON. — LOW SPIRITS. — BOWLES VERSUS POPE. — GRAY'S ELEGY. — INDIGESTION. — HOPE.

"January 23. 1821.

"FINE day. Read — rode — fired pistols, and returned. Dined — read. Went out at eight — made the usual visit. Heard of nothing but war, — 'the cry is still, They come.' The Carbonari seem to have no plan — nothing fixed among themselves, how, when, or what to do. In that case, they will make nothing of this project, so often postponed, and never put in action.

"Came home, and gave some necessary orders, in case of circumstances requiring a change of place. I shall act according to what may seem proper, when I hear decidedly what the Barbarians mean to do. At present, they are building a bridge of boats over the Po, which looks very warlike. A few days will probably show. I think of retiring towards Ancona, nearer the northern frontier; that is to say, if Teresa and her father are obliged to retire, which is most likely, as all the family are Liberals. If not, I shall stay. But my movements will depend upon the lady's wishes — for myself, it is much the same.

"I am somewhat puzzled what to do with my little daughter, and my effects, which are of some quantity and value, — and neither of them do in the seat of war, where I think of going. But there is an elderly lady who will take charge of *her*, and T. says that the Marchese C. will undertake to hold the chattels in safe keeping. Half the city are getting their affairs in marching trim. A pretty Carnival! The blackguards might as well have waited till Lent.

"January 24. 1821.

"Returned — met some masques in the Corso — 'Vive la bagatelle!' — the Germans are on the Po, the Barbarians at the gate, and their masters in council at Leybach (or whatever the eructation of the sound may syllable into a human pronunciation), and lo! they dance and sing and make merry, 'for to-morrow they may die.' Who can say that the Arlequins are not right? Like the Lady Baussiere, and my old friend Burton — I 'rode on.'

"Dined — (damn this pen!) — beef tough — there is no beef in Italy worth a curse; unless a man could eat an old ox with the hide on, singed in the sun.

"The principal persons in the events which may occur in a few days are gone out on a *shooting party*. If it were like a '*highland* hunting,' a pretext of the chase for a grand re-union of counsellors and chiefs, it would be all very well. But it is nothing more or less than a real snivelling, popping, small-shot, water-hen waste of powder, ammunition, and shot, for their own special amusement: a rare set of fellows for 'a man to risk his neck with,' as 'Marishall Wells' says in the Black Dwarf.

"If they gather, — 'whilk is to be doubted,' — they will not muster a thousand men. The reason of this is, that the populace are not interested, — only the higher and middle orders. I wish that the peasantry *were;* they are a fine savage race of two-legged leopards. But the Bolognese won't — the Romagnuoles can't without them. Or, if they try — what then? They will try, and man can do no more — and, if he *would* but try his utmost, much might be done. The Dutch, for instance, against the Spaniards — *then* the tyrants of Europe, since, the slaves, and, lately, the freedmen.

"The year 1820 was not a fortunate one for the individual me, whatever it may be for the nations. I lost a lawsuit, after two decisions in my favour. The project of lending money on an Irish mortgage was finally rejected by my wife's trustee after a year's hope and trouble. The Rochdale lawsuit had endured fifteen years, and always prospered till I married; since which, every thing has gone wrong — with me at least.

"In the same year, 1820, the Countess T. G. nata G^i. G^i. in despite of all I said and did to prevent it, *would* separate from her husband, Il Cavalier Commendatore G^i. &c. &c. &c. and all on the account of 'P. P. clerk of this parish.' The other little petty vexations of the year — overturns in carriages — the murder of people before one's door, and dying in one's beds — the cramp in swimming — colics — indigestions and bilious attacks, &c. &c. &c. —

> "Many small articles make up a sum,
> And hey ho for Caleb Quotem, oh!"

"January 25. 1821.

"Received a letter from Lord S. O.[1], state secretary of the Seven Islands — a fine fellow — clever — dished in England five years ago, and came abroad to retrench and to renew. He wrote from Ancona, in his way back to Corfu, on some matters of our own. He is son of the late Duke of L. by a second marriage. He wants me to go to Corfu. Why not? — perhaps I may, next spring.

"Answered Murray's letter — read — lounged. Scrawled this additional page of life's log-book. One day more is over of it and of me: — but 'which is best, life or death, the gods only know,' as Socrates said to his judges, on the breaking up of the tribunal.[2] Two thousand years since that sage's declaration of ignorance have not enlightened us more upon this important point; for, according to the Christian dispensation, no one can know whether he is *sure* of salvation — even the most righteous — since a single slip of faith may throw him on his back, like a skaiter, while gliding smoothly to his paradise. Now, therefore, whatever the certainty of faith in the facts may be, the certainty of the individual as to his happiness or misery is no greater than it was under Jupiter.

"It has been said that the immortality of the soul is a 'grand peut-être' — but still it is a *grand* one. Every body clings to it — the stupidest, and dullest, and wickedest of human bipeds is still persuaded that he is immortal.

"January 26. 1821.

"Fine day — a few mares' tails portending change, but the sky clear, upon the whole. Rode — fired pistols — good shooting. Coming back, met an old man. Charity — purchased a shilling's worth of salvation. If that was to be bought, I have given more to my fellow-creatures in this life — sometimes for *vice*, but, if not more *often*, at least more *considerably*, for virtue — than I now possess. I never in my life gave a mistress so much as I have sometimes given a poor man in honest distress; but no matter. The scoundrels who have all along persecuted me (with the help of * * who has crowned their efforts) will triumph; — and, when justice is done to me, it will be when this hand that writes is as cold as the hearts which have stung me.

"Returning, on the bridge near the mill, met an old woman. I asked her age — she said '*Tre croci.*' I asked my groom (though myself a decent Italian) what the devil *her* three crosses meant. He said, ninety years, and that she had five years more to boot!! I repeated the same three times — not to mistake — ninety-five years!!! — and she was yet rather active — *heard* my question, for she answered it — *saw* me, for she advanced towards me; and did not appear at all decrepit, though certainly touched with years. Told her to come to-morrow, and will examine her myself. I love phenomena. If she *is* ninety-five years old, she must recollect the Cardinal Alberoni, who was legate here.

"On dismounting, found Lieutenant E. just arrived from Faenza. Invited him to dine with me to-morrow. Did *not* invite him for to-day, because there was a small

[1] [Lord Sidney-Godolphin Osborne, son of Francis-Godolphin, fifth Duke of Leeds, by Catherine, daughter of Thomas Anguish, Esq.]

[2] ["It is time that I retire to death, and you to your affairs of life: which of us has the better is known to the gods, but to no mortal man." — Cicero: *Tusc. Quæst.* lib. i.]

turbot, (Friday, fast regularly and religiously,) which I wanted to eat all myself. Ate it.

"Went out — found T. as usual — music. The gentlemen, who make revolutions and are gone on a shooting, are not yet returned. They don't return till Sunday — that is to say, they have been out for five days, buffooning, while the interests of a whole country are at stake, and even they themselves compromised.

"It is a difficult part to play amongst such a set of assassins and blockheads — but, when the scum is skimmed off, or has boiled over, good may come of it. If this country could but be freed, what would be too great for the accomplishment of that desire? for the extinction of that Sigh of Ages? Let us hope. They have hoped these thousand years. The very revolvement of the chances may bring it — it is upon the dice.

"If the Neapolitans have but a single Massaniello amongst them, they will beat the bloody butchers of the crown and sabre. Holland, in worse circumstances, beat the Spains and Philips; America beat the English; Greece beat Xerxes; and France beat Europe, till she took a tyrant; South America beats her old vultures out of their nest; and, if these men are but firm in themselves, there is nothing to shake them from without.

"January 28. 1821.

"Lugano Gazette did not come. Letters from Venice. It appears that the Austrian brutes have seized my three or four pounds of English powder. The scoundrels! — I hope to pay them in *ball* for that powder. Rode out till twilight.

"Pondered the subjects of four tragedies to be written (life and circumstances permitting), to wit, Sardanapalus, already begun; Cain, a metaphysical subject, something in the style of Manfred, but in five *acts*, perhaps, with the chorus; Francesca of Rimini, in five acts; and I am not sure that I would not try Tiberius. I think that I could extract a something, of *my* tragic, at least, out of the gloomy sequestration and old age of the tyrant — and even out of his sojourn at Caprea — by softening the *details*, and exhibiting the despair which must have led to those very vicious pleasures. For none but a powerful and gloomy mind overthrown would have had recourse to such solitary horrors, — being also, at the same time, *old*, and the master of the world.

"*Memoranda.*

"What is Poetry? — The feeling of a Former world and Future.

"*Thought Second.*

"Why, at the very height of desire and human pleasure, — worldly, social, amorous, ambitious, or even avaricious, — does there mingle a certain sense of doubt and sorrow — a fear of what is to come — a doubt of what *is* — a retrospect to the past, leading to a prognostication of the future? (The best of Prophets of the future is the Past.) Why is this, or these? — I know not, except that on a pinnacle we are most susceptible of giddiness, and that we never fear falling except from a precipice — the higher, the more awful, and the more sublime; and, therefore, I am not sure that Fear is not a pleasurable sensation; at least, *Hope* is; and *what Hope* is there without a deep leaven of Fear? and what sensation is so delightful as Hope? and, if it were not for Hope, where would the Future be? — in hell. It is useless to say *where* the Present is, for most of us know; and as for the Past, *what* predominates in memory? — *Hope baffled.* Ergo, in all human affairs, it is Hope — Hope — Hope. I allow sixteen minutes, though I never counted them, to any given or supposed possession. From whatever place we commence, we know where it all must end. And yet, what good is there in knowing it? It does not make men better or wiser. During the greatest horrors of the greatest plagues, (Athens and Florence, for example — see Thucydides and Machiavelli,) men were more cruel and profligate than ever. It is all a mystery. I feel most things, but I know nothing, except

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"*Thought for a Speech of Lucifer, in the Tragedy of Cain:* —

"Were *Death* an *evil*, would *I* let thee *live?*
Fool! live as I live — as thy father lives,
And thy son's sons shall live for evermore.

"Past Midnight. One o' the clock.

"I have been reading Frederick Schlegel[2] (brother to the other of the name) till now, and I can make out nothing. He evidently

[1] Thus marked, with impatient strokes of the pen, by himself in the original.

[2] [A translation of his "Lectures on the History of Literature" was published at Edinburgh in 1818.]

shows a great power of words, but there is nothing to be taken hold of. He is like Hazlitt, in English, who *talks pimples* — a red and white corruption rising up (in little imitation of mountains upon maps), but containing nothing, and discharging nothing, except their own humours.

'I dislike him the worse, (that is, Schlegel,) because he always seems upon the verge of meaning; and, lo, he goes down like sunset, or melts like a rainbow, leaving a rather rich confusion, — to which, however, the above comparisons do too much honour.

"Continuing to read Mr. Frederick Schlegel. He is not such a fool as I took him for, that is to say, when he speaks of the North. But still he speaks of things *all over the world* with a kind of authority that a philosopher would disdain, and a man of common sense, feeling, and knowledge of his own ignorance, would be ashamed of. The man is evidently wanting to make an impression, like his brother, — or like George in the Vicar of Wakefield, who found out that all the good things had been said already on the right side, and therefore 'dressed up some paradoxes' upon the wrong side—ingenious, but false, as he himself says — to which 'the learned world said nothing, nothing at all, sir.'[1] The 'learned world,' however, *has* said something to the brothers Schlegel.

"It is high time to think of something else. What they say of the antiquities of the North is best.

"January 29. 1821.

"Yesterday, the woman of ninety-five years of age was with me. She said her eldest son (if now alive) would have been seventy. She is thin — short, but active — hears, and sees, and talks incessantly. Several teeth left — all in the lower jaw, and single front teeth. She is very deeply wrinkled, and has a sort of scattered grey beard over her chin, at least as long as my mustachios. Her head, in fact, resembles the drawing in crayons of Pope the poet's mother, which is in some editions of his works.

"I forgot to ask her if she remembered Alberoni[2] (legate here), but will ask her next time. Gave her a louis — ordered her a new suit of clothes, and put her upon a weekly pension. Till now, she had worked at gathering wood and pine-nuts in the forest, — pretty work at ninety-five years old! She had a dozen children, of whom some are alive. Her name is Maria Montanari.

"Met a company of the sect (a kind of Liberal Club) called the 'Americani' in the forest, all armed, and singing, with all their might, in Romagnuole — '*Sem* tutti soldat' per la liberta' ('we are all soldiers for liberty'). They cheered me as I passed — I returned their salute, and rode on. This may show the spirit of Italy at present.

"My to-day's journal consists of what I omitted yesterday. To-day was much as usual. Have rather a better opinion of the writings of the Schlegels than I had four-and-twenty hours ago; and will amend it still further, if possible.

"They say that the Piedmontese have at length arisen — *ça ira!*

"Read Schlegel. Of Dante he says, 'that at no time has the greatest and most national of all Italian poets ever been much the favourite of his countrymen.' 'Tis false! There have been more editors and commentators (and imitators, ultimately) of Dante than of all their poets put together. *Not* a favourite! Why, they talk Dante — write Dante — and think and dream Dante at this moment (1821) to an excess, which would be ridiculous, but that he deserves it.[3]

"In the same style this German talks of gondolas on the Arno — a precious fellow to dare to speak of Italy!

"He says also that Dante's chief defect is a want, in a word, of gentle feelings. Of gentle feelings! — and Francesca of Rimini — and the father's feelings in Ugolino — and Beatrice — and 'La Pia!' Why, there is gentleness in Dante beyond all gentleness, when he is tender. It is true that, treating of the Christian Hades, or Hell, there is not much scope or site for gentleness — but who *but* Dante could have introduced any 'gentleness' at all into *Hell?* Is there any in Mil-

[1] ["Finding that the best things remained to be said on the wrong side, I resolved to write a book that should be wholly new. I therefore dressed up three paradoxes with ingenuity. They were false indeed, but they were new. — 'Well, my boy,' cried I, 'and what did the learned world say to your paradoxes.' — 'Sir,' replied my son, 'the learned world said nothing to my paradoxes; nothing at all, Sir.'" — *Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xx.]

[2] [Alberoni, the son of a gardener of Placentia, rose by his intrigues and his talents to be cardinal and prime minister of Spain. After his disgrace, in 1720, he went to Rome, and was made legate of Romagna by Innocent XIII. He died in 1752, at the age of eighty-seven.]

[3] ["I don't wonder," said Lord Byron, "at the enthusiasm of the Italians about Dante. He is the poet of liberty. Persecution, exile, the dread of a foreign grave, could not shake his principles. There is no Italian gentleman, scarcely any well-educated girl, that has not all the finer passages of Dante at the finger's ends; particularly the Ravennese. The Guiccioli, for instance, can almost repeat any part of the Divine Comedy."— MEDWIN.]